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God's Wrathful Children

Toward an Ethic of Vengeance, Retribution, and Renewal for a Post-Apartheid Nation.

by

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ABSTRACT

God's wrath results in divine acts of vengeance in favour of the powerless and the oppressed. This manifestation of anger is devoid of hatred and malice, for in the first epistle of John, love is equated with God in such a way that it is the personification of the divine Being (1 John 4:7-12). God's grace, forming the nexus between compassion and wrath, renders any suggestion of a contradiction in the divine nature untenable.

Human vengeance is, however, an ambiguous concept. It emanates from human anger, which often includes hatred and malice. Nevertheless, this cannot simply be dismissed as a destructive force, as it can be a valid form of resistance. The crucial theological-ethical question arises: Can the wrath of God's children (human vengeance) legitimately reflect divine anger?

The first part of the thesis deals with the historical content of God's wrathful children, focusing on the history of struggle in South Africa. The age-old history of injustices perpetrated against black people has generated a deep-seated anger, a dangerous socio-political rage that cannot be ignored. The central question is: How should black people handle their anger *theologically*?

Given the multi-religious and -cultural South African context this issue needs addressing at an ecumenical level, while taking inter-faith perspective into account. The Zealots of first-century Palestine, the late-medieval reformer Thomas Müntzer, and the African-American activist Malcolm X, wrestled with the interplay between faith and vengeance. Case studies of these revolutionaries are dealt with in the second part of the thesis, and assistance is sought from their experiences in clarifying our own theological formulation. The final part of the thesis argues that post-apartheid South Africa requires a comprehensive, inter-faith 'ethic of vengeance' to curb destructive black political rage.

To my beautiful children, Alison
and Enid who, I believe, will grow
up in a land that has been healed.
- 2 Chronicles 7:14

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	All-African Convention
AB	Afrikaner Broederbond
A.D.	Anno Domini
AME	African Methodist Episcopal Church
ANC	African National Congress
APLA	Azanian People's Liberation Army
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
AZACTU	Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organization
BBB	Blanke Beskermingsburo
BC	Black Consciousness
B.C.E.	Before the Christian (or Common) Era
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BPC	Black People's Convention
CCB	Civil Co-operation Bureau
C.E.	Christian (or Common) Era
CIIR	Catholic Institute for International Relations
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPC	Coloured People's Congress
CYL	Congress Youth League
DEIC	Dutch East India Company
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
DRMC	Dutch Reformed Mission Church
EATWOT	The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians
ECA	European Cultural Association
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
ICT	Institute for Contextual Theology
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Union
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
MMI	Moslem Mosque, Incorporated
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NF	National Forum
NGK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
NGSK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk
NHK	Nederduitsche Hervormde Kerk
NIC	Natal Indian Congress
NOI	Nation of Islam
NP	National Party
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
OAAU	Organisation of Afro-American Unity
PAC	Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania
PCR	Programme to Combat Racism
SACBC	Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAIC	South African Indian Congress
SASO	South African Students Organization
SNCC	Student Nonviolent Co-ordinating Committee
SPROCAS	Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society
SS	Schutzstaffel
UCM	University Christian Movement

UCT	University of Cape Town
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNIA	Universal Negro Improvement Association
UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCRP-SA	World Conference on Religion and Peace (South African Chapter)

JOSEPHUS' WORKS

Ant.	The Antiquities of the Jews
Life	The Life of Flavius Josephus
War	The Jewish War

SACRED TEXTS

LXX	The Septuagint
NIV	New International Version
NEB	New English Bible
Qur'ān	The Holy Qur'ān
RSV	Revised Standard Version
S.	Sūra

PERIODICALS

Archiv Ref	Archiv für Reformationgeschichte
C B Q	The Catholic Biblical Quarterly
Chr Cent	The Christian Century
Chr Cris	Christianity and Crisis: A Christian Journal of Opinion
Chr T	Christianity Today
Com Via	Communio Viatorum: A Theological Quarterly
Concor Th M	Concordia Theological Monthly
Dialog	Dialog (Minnesota)
Drew G	The Drew Gateway
Encount	Encounter
Ev Th	Evangelische Theologie
Expos T	The Expository Times
Harv Th R	The Harvard Theological Review
J African Hist	Journal of African History
J B Th S A	Journal of Black Theology in South Africa
J Ch St	Journal of Church and State
J Rel	The Journal of Religion
J Rel Ethics	Journal of Religious Ethics
J Rel Thot	The Journal of Religious Thought
J Sem St	Journal of Semitic Studies
J Th So Africa	Journal of Theology for Southern Africa
J Th St	The Journal of Theological Studies
Luth Q	Lutheran Quarterly
Menn Q R	The Mennonite Quarterly Review
Mod Chr	The Modern Churchman
Muslim W	The Muslim World
Nov Test	Novum Testamentum

R Qumran	Revue de Qumran
S E Asia J Th	South East Asia Journal of Theology
Sixteenth Cent J	Sixteenth Century Journal
Sound	Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal
Th Today	Theology Today
Th Z	Theologische Zeitschrift
Union S Q R	Union Seminary Quarterly Review

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

THE JANUS FACE OF HUMAN VENGEANCE

Belief in the love and power of an omnipotent and gracious Supreme Being is put to the harshest test amidst the experience of oppression and poverty. The Bible at the same time suggests that such human creations elicit anger from God, even though wrath is not her/his essence. Over and against the Stoic ideal of *apatheia* (no-pathos), built on the view that God is without passion and therefore cannot be moved to wrath, Scripture affirms that "the righteous God is perturbed by the unrighteousness" of humankind.[1] The implication is that there exists a fundamental relationship between God's wrath, the history of struggle, and human vengeance. A theology that neglects this history, is a false theology.[2]

In relating God's grace and wrath to human history Karl Barth, in typically dialectic fashion, describes the former as the divine Yes, whilst the latter constitutes the divine No. Grace is extended to those who resist, but it is received as "non-grace, wrath and judgment". Sinners find themselves in a *status corruptionis*, failing and unable to fulfil their God-given obligation.[3] Sinners are left morally confined and existentially bewildered. In his *The Epistle to the Romans* Barth uses a particular metaphor to depict this state of corruption: the "Night". All of creaturely life is thwarted, damaged and sentenced to death, as a result of the divine reaction to unbelief. "In so far as we choose scandal rather than faith, the footprint in the vast riddle of the world is the footprint" of God's wrath.[4] The ungodliness of humanity, Barth

continues, manifests itself in the making of the idol, the 'No-God', so that the wrath of the true God becomes inevitable. We are unable to grasp the meaning of our salvation. We do not move joyfully with life towards its end, but with "a bitter-sweet surrender to what is inevitable."[5] Our blindness and caprice prevents us from hearing the voice of God out of the whirlwind. Fetishes in the likeness of corruptible humankind - Family, Nation, State, Church, Fatherland - are projected as gods, forming the pillars of 'the religious life', which is nothing more than romantic unbelief.

> Fugitive is the soul in this world and soulless is the world, when men (sic) do not find themselves within the sphere of the knowledge of the unknown God, when they avoid the true God in whom they and the world must lose themselves in order that both may find themselves again. This is the Cause of the Night ... this also is the Cause of the wrath of God which has been manifested over our heads. [6]

Kierkegaard had earlier given expression to this reality of human confusion and sin in a similar manner, in the notion of the "concept of dread": "Dread throws itself despairingly into the arms of remorse."[7] Elsewhere Kierkegaard develops this notion in terms of "despair". Plunged in such misery that death itself may be one's only hope, despair then arises as the disconsolateness of not being able to die. For both Barth and Kierkegaard the only hope and solution to the human predicament is the decisive moment in which it is recognised that for God all things are possible. God alone can redeem the human state. The theory of atonement assumed here by both Kierkegaard and Barth affirms the need to appease the wrath and anger of God. Due reparation, it is suggested, is made to God through the cross of Christ, and thus the sins of humanity

are forgiven. Thomas Hart discovers in this satisfaction theory of redemption the portrayal of a negative image of God. It is of one "whose anger will not be satisfied until the last penny is paid. There has to be a bloody sacrifice before there can be forgiveness."[8]

Scanning the different historical frameworks of interpretation e.g. the Hellenistic world, the Middle Ages (especially Anselm's exposition), the Reformation and the modern era, F.W. Dillistone notes that no single theory of atonement can be regarded as definitive. The theories which dominate any particular period reflect the perceived nature of alienation and estrangement prevalent at the time. As such atonement doctrines which reflect the need for the wrath of God to be appeased, emerged when this kind of necessity made cultural and religious sense, and should be measured within the context of the assumptions and interests of their time. The once-for-all self-offering of Christ needs, therefore, be *re-interpreted* in every new situation of brokenness and disruption.[9]

From the perspective of oppressed people, the language and mental constructs of traditional notions of the atonement make little sense. In the *theologia crucis*, for example, of Jon Sobrino and Takatso Mofokeng, liberation of the oppressed is taken as its starting point. The poor's cry of protest against the absence of God is closely identified with Jesus' cry of abandonment. His suffering is regarded as being relived daily in the lives of the poor. Here the theme of liberation is introduced in the form of a

paradox: Christ liberates us by his own suffering, and in so doing takes the humiliation and suffering of the oppressed into his own history - by being present in their suffering.

> In historical terms God is to be found in the crosses of the oppressed rather than in beauty, power, or wisdom ... Who can comprehend the aspect of divine revelation in the cross of Christ? The person who feels sorrow in the face of another's misery and who tries to overcome it by bridging the distance between self and the other's misery. [10]

The oppressed human being thus becomes the mediation of God; within the suffering of the poor God is made known to humankind. Yet, the scandal of the cross ultimately does not end in humiliation, despair and death, but victory as embodied in the resurrection. The latter, Mofokeng contends, is the "vindication of the tenacity" of God's gracious love.[11] A dialectic between suffering and redemption, anger and grace, humiliation and victory, is established in the Christ-event. The scriptural witness concerning the wrath of God towards sinners therefore provides an alternative way of dealing with (satisfying) God's wrath, through dealing with human suffering. Differently stated, God's wrath and Christ's suffering is appeased by eliminating the suffering of the oppressed. In brief, this re-reading of traditional 'appeasement' doctrine is the basis of atonement teaching which is relevant to and for the poor and oppressed.

Divine omnipotence is not defined in the abstract, nor is it discussed as an intellectual problem in Scripture. It is portrayed through the liberating acts of God in human history. Drawing on

this tradition, third world theologians in the *Road to Damascus* document discern the wrath of God in the wrath of the oppressed, suggesting that in the resolution of the wrath of the people is the resolution of God's wrath.

> The true God of the poor who is angry about injustice in the world, vindicates the poor, pulls down the mighty from their thrones and lifts up the lowly. This is the God who will judge all human beings according to what they have done or not for the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick and those in prison. [12]

J. Míguez Bonino affirms a similar approach in detecting a linkage between God's "powerful acts of liberation" and God's vengeance.[13] Albert Nolan's remark that "God is angry, God is absolutely furious about what is being done to people in South Africa today," is axiomatic to this thesis. He further observes that the anger of God has become "visible for all to see in the anger of the people."[14]

Consider the depth of the anger transparent in the following poem:

> They tortured our black souls
> little knowing:
> By detention
> they had sent us on a Black holiday
> By assaulting us
> they were teaching us hate;
> By insulting us
> they had told us never
> to turn the other cheek.[15]

My concern is with the ethical implications of divine wrath. If God's anger implies divine vengeance, does that mean that the wronged - "God's wrathful children" - may also avenge themselves on their oppressors? Ronald Bainton answers in the negative, quoting from Romans 12: "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." He maintains that "we are called upon to imitate the mercy but not the wrath of

God."[16] But to cite this text a-contextually is a theologically insufficient and politically impotent response to the needs of the poor. In the final section of this thesis an alternative, historically contextual interpretation of this text is provided. Many Christians do not seem to comprehend the apostle Paul's simple admonishment: "Those who sow to please their sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction" (Gal. 6:7, 8a). The rage of black people in South Africa can only be understood correctly from an historical perspective. Successive generations of white people have sown the seeds of alienation and hatred. They cannot expect to reap kindness and respect in return. Such pseudo-innocence regarding the link between black anger and suffering, needs to be exposed.[17]

Method and Outline of Thesis

To write critical contextual theology one requires a serious encounter with history. The examination of corporate and individual histories can be approached in different ways, e.g. by using the theoretical tools of cultural anthropology, political science, historical materialism, structuralism, historiography etc. My engagement with history is modest, in the sense that it does not involve the scientific methods of these different schools to discover new insights. Rather, the reflection on the experiences of the oppressed (in this case, their modes of vengeance), could be categorised as phenomenological and existential, relying largely on a synthesis of modern revisionist history and "Africanist" research.[18] The historical content provides the necessary parameters within which a

theological understanding of human vengeance can be developed. At the close of every historical section (South African history written from below, the Jewish Zealots, Thomas Müntzer, and Malcolm X), a theological ethical interpretation of their significance for and its relation to the main thesis, will be proposed. Traditional theological notions concerning divine wrath and human vengeance must be tested against the historical reality of actual exploitation, dispossession and resistance, in order to resuscitate the liberative resources of traditional theology. Methodologically this implies the employment of an historical hermeneutic, a process that needs to incorporate the informal theological processes, such as storytelling and indigenous imagery, into a formal structure.

In the *first section* of this thesis consideration is given to the resistance of the indigenous people in the colonial era. The enquiry focuses on the development of black politics since the 1880s and the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolence at the start of the twentieth century. Charles Villa-Vicencio identifies a "complex range of responses" to colonisation.[19] Co-option and collaboration with the oppressive structures have always been part of the black experience, although a seething sense of anger and resentfulness has also been part of this response - hidden below the surface. Societies engaged in resistance and collaboration, suggests Shula Marks, have more in common with one another than is often realised.[20] No people known to historians, E.P. Thompson shows, has ever been exploited without finding some way of fighting back.[21] The various implicit (latent) and explicit dimensions of the anger

inherent to this process, are identified in the first section as a basis for developing the theological link between the anger of God and oppressed people.

Mark Mathabane's reminiscences of the 1976 Soweto Revolt, for instance, include "daily rumours" that "soon the streets would run red with blood - white people's blood."[22] The study undertaken here seeks to deconstruct these kinds of utterances, plumbing them for theological insights into the link between the wrath of humanity and the wrath of God. A theology from the underside demands an ability to listen attentively to the voices of the poor where, the Bible teaches, the voice of God is heard. To interpret the wrath of the oppressed and the anger of the wronged through their songs of sorrow, street poetry and litanies, imagery and mythology, is the beginning of authentic contextual theology. Among the most imaginative of these wrathful expressions is the song of praise for "the heroes" and simultaneous curse called down on "the enemies", often expressed in *itoyi-toyi* (a political dance-ritual):

Leader	:	Nanku Baba ...	(Here is the father)
Response	:	Tsa!	(Yes!)
Leader	:	Oliver Tambo	
Response	:	we tsa!	(Yes! Yes!)
Leader	:	Nanku Baba ...	
Response	:	Tsa!	
Leader	:	uMandela ...	
Response	:	we tsa!	
Leader	:	Lenju Botha ...	(This dog, Botha)
Response	:	voertsek! voertsek!	(away with him)
Leader	:	Lenju Malan ...	
Response	:	voertsek! voertsek!	
Leader	:	Wee-tsa we tsa	(Come comrades)
Response	:	Woza sigijime!	(come let us go)
Leader	:	Guerilla, guerilla, guerilla!	
Response	:	Woza sigijime!	
Leader	:	Aim to shoot the Boers ...	
Response	:	Woza sigijime!	

Leader : Aim to shoot a killer-man ...
Response : Woza sigijime!
Leader : Shoot to shoot, guerilla ...
Response : Woza sigijime!
Leader : Kill the dogs, guerilla ...
Response : Gqwa! Gqwa! Gqwa! (bang, bang, bang).[23]

The *second part* of the thesis shifts away from the South African situation to a broader context, beyond the confines on which South African contextual theology usually draws. This broader perspective entails the socio-political challenges with which the Zealots, Müntzer, and Malcolm X were confronted, as they shaped their ethical position on wrath and violence. Although marginalised in dominant theological reflection, the theological basis of their options requires careful consideration.

The *final section* of the thesis is pivotal. The first two sections relay the experiences, passions and theological motives of people who have opted for violent retaliation. In the third part the quest for vengeance is weighed in the light of traditional theological categories such as love, forgiveness, sacrifice, and peace. The Christian ethicist is faced with the 'standard' argument that it is God's exclusive right to judgmental and wrathful intervention. Does this eschatological reality in effect mean the rejection of human vengeance and the theological judgment of those who dare to "take up the sword"? Are God's wrathful children theologically not entitled to avenge themselves? How, for example, should we theologically respond to the poets who speak of the residents of District Six, forcefully removed from their homes during the 1970s? How will they be vindicated? Is their longing for revenge theologically illegitimate?

The children will revenge us
For better or for worse
Cause they can clearly hear the steps
And understands its curse
For they too have been broken
And scattered like the bricks
The stones, cement and concrete
That once was District Six. [24]

Diagrammatically the question is theologically posed:

Divine rage ----------→ divine vengeance

Black rage ----------→ ?

A Conceptual Definition of Terms

a. Human vengeance is an ambiguous concept; it has a janus face. Thus concluded the Dutch theologian, E. Smelik, who felt compelled to grapple with the desire for vengeance during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands (1940-45). If the differentiation between *wraak* (revenge, vengefulness, blind destructive fury, vindictiveness) and *vergelding* (recompense, requital, retribution, reward) is not maintained, a serious terminological devaluation takes place. While "vengeance" frequently serves to denote both, its distinct applications *wraak* and *vergelding* are in fact not interchangeable. The former, Smelik argues, belongs in the sphere of "het onverstand, de onwelwillendheid, de onbeschaafdheid, de onredelijkheid, den haat" (senselessness, unkindness, unmannerliness, unreasonableness, hate). Human vengeance, then, needs to be removed from the subjective, interpersonal sphere and subjected to the objective control of a court of justice. It is in the juridical terrain that the mode of vengeance is morally manifested in the *vergelding*-forms of recompense, requital, retribution and reward.[25]

In a later work Smelik generally defines vengeance as a partly emotional, partly defensive human reaction, whenever a person's dignity is injured or interests endangered. Its aim is to repair the imbalance of relations. "Deze afweerbeweging heeft de bedoeling in den weg der vergelding het verbroken evenwicht der verhoudingen te herstellen."[26] Vengeance in the sense of revenge/vindictiveness is uncontrolled instinctive passion. Vengeance in the sense of retribution, however, signifies the restraint thereof. It is actually "...een norm."[27] "Avenge" is therefore restricted to inflicting punishment as an act of retributive justice or as a vindication of propriety.

b. In this thesis "anger" and "wrath" are treated as synonyms. This approach is borne out by A. Campbell's explanation that *orge* is a perfectly ordinary Greek word for both concepts. There is no case for bringing in a distinction in English which is not in the Greek. It should be taken as a feeling-signal that all is not well in our relation to other persons or groups or to the world around us. "Anger is a mode of connectedness to others and it is always a vivid way of caring."[28] In Campbell's view wrath/anger can be a positive ally of love. Thus the lack of wrath in the face of injustice in fact means the failure to care. In the same vein Leon Morris suggests: "There is an anger we speak of as 'righteous indignation' ... which is perfectly compatible with pure love."[29]

Naturally, such an understanding of wrath falls in a *different* category than hatred, hostility or revenge. Rather, it is more

closely related to "rage" which may be regarded as an intensified version of anger. During the late sixties W. Grier and P. Cobbs analysed the linkage of "racial incidents" in the United States to the psychological affects of a history of suffering on African-Americans. "The centuries of senseless cruelty and the permeation of the black man's (sic) character with the conviction of his (sic) own hatefulness and inferiority tell a sorry tale."[30] The writers are convinced that the self-hate is then redirected toward the "tormentor." The amount of the rage of the oppressed becomes a direct function of the depth of their grief. "This quantum of grief, transformed into aggression, is released in the form of "apocalyptic, black rage."[31] An atonement theory that bypasses the negative selfhood and actual situation of the oppressed, is simply not adequate. God's anger at injustice is resolved when the anger of the poor, with whom the suffering Christ has identified himself, is taken seriously and their conditions ameliorated.

The long history of injustices perpetrated against black people in South Africa, has cultivated a deep anger. The pertinent question is how theologically is this given reality to be handled as we face the challenge of reconstruction in a post-apartheid society. In the discussion that follows political rage is weighed and tested against biblical and theological-ethical principles. The ambiguity of human vengeance (both as a positive and negative force) has embedded itself in the history of resistance. This study constitutes an attempt to facilitate a theological assessment both of this anger and of ways in which it can (and must) be appeased. My con-

tention is that nation-building in this country must be undergirded by a comprehensive "ethic of vengeance" as a basis for giving constructive direction to the anger and determination that lives in the souls of oppressed people. The concern is essentially pastoral. The question is how can rage be positively channelled? This is of indispensable political importance.

Part One

THE BLACK QUEST FOR VENGEANCE:

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Preface to Part One

This section of the thesis deals with the historical content of God's wrathful children, focusing on the history of struggle in South Africa. Attention is drawn to the anger of the indigenous people and their eventual acts of vengeance, both in the colonial era (till early 1900s) and the apartheid era (1948 to the present), as a basis for providing a social context within which the substantive theological argument of the remaining chapters needs to be located. Crucial to chapter one is the identifying of theological-ethical questions concerning land-theft and related issues. This is accomplished by allowing the history (story) to speak for itself. No overt attempt is made to employ cultural, anthropological, political or historical materialist hermeneutics in so doing. Such interpretative frameworks are implicit to the ultimate aim which is to provide a historical context within which to engage in a theological understanding of God's wrathful children. The role of Christianity, and more particularly the institutional churches, is given specific attention. The subjugation of black South Africans in God's name by apartheid ideologues in Church and State (chapter two), raises the pertinent question: How does the vindication of God's holy name cohere with the vengeance of the oppressed? The historical consideration included in Part One, is therefore used primarily to outline the magnitude of black people's wrath, posing the question as to how we ought to approach this history theologically.

CHAPTER ONE

A HISTORY OF DISPOSSESSION

> For God so loved the world, that He generously gave South Africa to the white dominant group, and if they so wished, they could give some slices of it to the indigenous people.
> - Buti Tlhagale

Hypotheses

1. The existing anger of the black oppressed of South Africa has much to do with the colonial encroachment on their land. The situation was exacerbated by the history of slavery.
2. The resistance of the indigenous people included crude forms of revenge e.g. the attempt to burn Cape Town to the ground in 1736.
3. It needs to be shown that the act of land robbery had been condoned and theologically legitimized by Christianity to a large extent. An ethic of vengeance implies the rediscovery and reapplication of positive African religious values and ideals.

In the introduction it is argued that there exists a definite link between the prevailing anger of this country's black people and the colonial history. Here it is shown that this rage, political in nature, emerged because the indigenous people were robbed of their most precious possession: land. Even the first revolt of the earliest inhabitants of the Cape area, the Khoi-Khoi, was motivated by a desire to avenge themselves on the foreign whites who were encroaching on their land. All the different Wars of Resistance

fought by the Nguni and Sotho people were essentially wars of vengeance. The causes of these land-wars, namely greed and theft, are addressed theologically in the concluding paragraph of Part One. In the African tradition land meant "life" and their alienation from it meant economic deprivation and suffering.

The focus in this chapter is on the military conquest of the land by the Dutch and British colonial powers and the responses of indigenous (black) people to it. Naturally, detailed reports on the different Wars of Resistance lie outside the parameters of this survey. At the same time the ongoing calls for political retribution can only be understood in the light of sufficient historical data. What James Cochrane has called the "double deprivation" of the indigenous people, namely, the loss of land and the loss of political power, becomes the hermeneutical key in our search for an ethic that will take the historic wrongs *au serieux*.[1] The contention here is that the suffering which resulted and still results from this history of dispossession, needs to be addressed *theologically* from the perspective of the dispossessed - the discarded people.[2] Attention is also given to the complicity of Christian missionaries in the conquest.[3] The sequence of events is more or less determined by the succession of the violent clashes between the advancing colonists and the aboriginal inhabitants.

THE STONE AGE PEOPLE

> We have lived very contentedly before these Dutch plunderers molested us, and why should we not do so if left to ourselves? We have a great deal of our blood to avenge.
> - Klaas Stuurman, Khoi-Khoi leader, 1799

Only in recent years have historians tried to reconceive the situation of the Khoi-Khoi herders and San hunter-gatherers who lived in southern Africa for millennia.[4] Shula Marks, critically assessing the historiographies of some well known writers in 1972, correctly noted that "Most history writing of South Africa dismisses them (the Khoisan) in passing."[5] They tend instead to cast the Khoisan history in clichéd terms which ultimately distorts the reality - a reality which Susan Newton-King portrays in the following way: "Every stage in the long process of European expansion into the hinterland of the Cape met with fierce and bitter resistance from both Khoikhoi and San."[6] Negative stereotypes that project an image of these people as being passive victims of the colonists, belie the rapid advances made in socio-scientific investigation.[7]

It was the Portuguese, craving to "discover" the world outside of Europe, who reached the Cape in 1488. Having survived tempestuous seas, they called it Cabo Tormentuoso (Cape of Storms). Bredekamp sketches the ironic nature of Bartholomeus Diaz' achievement: It "... marked the beginning of a new era of exploration and trade; for the indigenous Khoikhoi and San it was the beginning of a process of colonial subjugation."[8] Diaz was followed by Vasco da Gama and Francisco de Almeida, but the contact was punctuated by violence, culminating in the killing of De Almeida and 150 soldiers on

Table Bay beach in 1570.[9]

The Spanish and the British were the first to challenge the Portuguese monopoly, but by the turn of the 16th century, the Dutch began to rule supreme on the seas. In 1619 the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) established on the Batavian island Java a "Council of India", whose responsibility it was to monitor their trade in that region. Both the British and the Dutch found on their eastward journeys, the Cape a useful half-way house.[10]

The Khoi-Khoi's very existence evolved around a pastoral economy. As semi-nomadic communities they frequently adhered to a fixed migratory pattern according to seasonal changes. The disadvantage of this scattered, nomadic existence was that it rendered political unity or centralization impossible. Whenever disasters such as drought, disease and theft impoverished the communities, they frequently reverted to the status of hunter-gatherers. And this process of possible economic recovery was "virtually destroyed when the coming of the Europeans disrupted the geographic isolation of the Khoikhoi".[11]

Coeree, leader of the Gorachouqua (a Khoi-Khoi clan), played a significant part in regard to a new selective attitude of the herders when in 1613 he was abducted by the British and taken to England to be trained for the role of mediator. After his return, instead of becoming the official stock barterer, Coeree promptly spoilt the market by informing the Khoi-Khoi of the low value of the goods they were being offered in exchange. Debroey quotes

Ralph Standish and Ralph Croft who in 1611 alleged that the Dutch stole and killed Khoi stock, whilst in 1617 one Robert Adams reported that "his own men illegally took possession of a great number of oxen".[12]

The commercial nature of the relationship between the Khoi-Khoi and the Dutch changed when the latter decided to establish a more permanent station at the Cape. In 1657 the first handful of free burghers were simply granted land behind Table Mountain. As soon as the Khoi-Khoi realized that, unlike their previous visitors, the Dutch planned to stay, their initially friendly overtures turned to hostility.[13] As early as 1655 they put it to Van Riebeeck that they were being robbed of their territory as they regarded the occupied country as Khoi land. But the Dutchman rejected the claim and proceeded to deprive the Peninsula Khoi-Khoi of their best grazing lands and traditional water sources.[14] In his diary the commander revealed a growing obsession to take hold of all the Khoi stock and even the people themselves, including women and children. He felt that he needed to wreak revenge on the Khoi-Khoi for all the discomfort they had caused the Company.[15]

This portion of black history attempts to demonstrate why revenge became a motif in Khoi resistance. Despite protestations and sound arguments by various Khoi leaders, the Dutch settlers proceeded in a violent way to claim aboriginal land.

THE IRON AGE PEOPLE

> Colonialism is never satisfied with having the native in its grip but, by some strange logic, it must turn to his past and disfigure and distort it.
>
> - Steve Biko

The question of African origins remains problematic, so that in the 20th century the vast majority of Southern African people have come to be classified under one of two broad generic, convenient labels - Nguni (i.e. the Zulu, Swazi, Xhosa, Themba) or Sotho - both based on broad linguistic uniformity. Archaeologists had also established, in accordance with the graduality of the settlement process, the strong probability of peaceful interaction between some Nguni peoples and the Stone Age Khoisan. There existed a natural, ecological boundary between the Iron Age community to the east and Khoisan hunter-gatherers and herders to the west. At the same time, there was considerable interaction between them across this invisible frontier "until it was finally swept away by the advance of white colonists from the Cape..."[16] This is not to suggest that the African Iron Age was a golden age of peace and tranquillity, but "the evidence of interaction serves to expose the myth of ethnic isolation".[17] In the light of that ethnic diversity, J. Peires declares: "...the search for the trail of the 'pure' Sotho or the 'pure' Nguni becomes somewhat ridiculous".[18]

Another historical fact that speaks against the myth that African peoples practised ethnic exclusivism, is the evidence that trade was conducted between the northern Nguni and the Portuguese as ear-

ly as the mid-sixteenth century. Although the different chiefdoms competed for water and pasturage which often led to conflict, alliances and mutual aid occurred more frequently. Ironically, the possession of desired prestige goods, such as cattle, was often a more effective means of domination that superior weaponry. In fact, most conflicts were bloodless. Before 1800 no Southern African chief possessed a standing army, and he depended on the voluntary compliance of his subjects to execute his orders.[19]

In contrast with this tableau of mutual tolerance and comparative peace, a chain reaction of attack, counter-attack, devastation, dispersal and forced migration occurred between 1822 and 1840 that constituted the *mfecane* (which means 'the crushing') or *difaqane* ('the hammering'). It was a cataclysmic upheaval in which thousands died. Most historians find the origins of these bloody events within the African communities themselves, concentrating on the internal divisions and especially 'Tshaka's brutality', but what they fail to note, is that the *difaqane* was but the final result of a much more devastating event. Gabriel Setiloane argues that few historians attempt to look beyond the *difaqane* to seek the true cause of the turbulence namely "... the introduction, some 150 years earlier (1652), of three new elements which were not there before. These are the white man (sic), the horse, and the gun and ammunition".[20] The whites came with a sense of land ownership, which was in contradiction with African traditional views and thus unacceptable because it was "... anti-social, and was seen as a denial of the livelihood ... of the other groups".[21]

The attitude towards land was culturally grounded in different per-

ceptions formed by African communalism and European individualism. This inevitably led to violent misunderstanding. Explaining the fundamental difference, Setiloane states in a recent publication that land, from an African perspective, could not be individually acquired. "It cannot be possessed nor held to the exclusion of the good and survival of the total community. It is like rain, and river water or wood in the forest, a natural provision!"[22] European individualism eroded the African communal values and formed the basis of a violent, illegal claiming of land. Colonialism inevitably caused new spirals of retaliation. As the Khoi-Khoi lost their traditional grazing lands, they were forced northwards, seriously disturbing the comparative peace and mutual understanding established with other African groups. Colonialism created and intensified cultural and racial animosities in a land where a premium had been put on the common Southern African derivation.

THE SLAVE EXPERIENCE

> It is clear that slavery did contribute to building much of the wealth of the colony in its early stages of development. However, these advantages were gained at the cost of the exploitation of human labour and the creation of a coercive and divided social system.
>
> - J. Armstrong and N. Worden

It should be noted that the Dutch were well acquainted with slavery by 1652, when Jan van Riebeeck established the DEIC's refreshment station at the southern tip of the African continent. From the very beginning, slavery became an integral part of the Company's activities, first in India, and then in South Africa. The East Indian experience of the Dutch meant that slavery came to the Cape ful-

ly developed, governed by laws already in force (The Statues of India, 1642).[23] The first free burghers who were granted land in 1657, immediately demanded labour. However, the indigenous Khoi-Khoi who had turned hostile after acknowledging that the Europeans had come to stay, proved unwilling. Dutch law, moreover, forbade the enslavement of the local population, not out of moral concern, but that such a policy would have imperilled the cattle trade on which the post depended. To meet the demand for an additional labour supply, the first batch of slaves landed in 1657.[24]

Slavery was finally abolished at the Cape in 1834 but according to Armstrong and Worden, there was also a steady private trade in slaves conducted by Company officials for their own profit. Slavery provided the basis of the economic expansion and stratification of the arable farming regions, and it formed a major source of profit to many colonists at the Cape up until the 1820s. Slaves were items of property and it was their subordination to their masters which formed the essence of a paternalistic and dehumanizing relationship. It was in the Company's interest to treat their tools well; a dead slave was a loss, which was taken equally serious as the loss of at least an ox.[25]

Language diversity and the geographical dispersal of the rural slave population inhibited a unifying culture. It was thus difficult for slaves at the Cape to build up a strongly cohesive 'world of their own' in a society where they were divided by origin, atomised into a large number of small-scale holdings and unable to develop a pattern of family life or continuity over generations.[26]

It was even more difficult for slaves to resist their subjugation in an organized way. The most frequent form of resistance was desertion. Over and against vindictive outbursts, two organised rebellions occurred - both after the British occupation, but these were crushed even before it had begun.[27]

The Racial Factor

It is true that slavery, in the precolonial era, was practised for centuries. There is, nonetheless, an important difference between the early form of slavery which had then been viewed as a necessary (albeit the basest) component of the social order and its later manifestation. The possibility that slaves could free themselves and even advance to the top of the societal ladder, was built into the old system. Before the colonial enslavement of non-European peoples, slaves were generally viewed and treated as a particular socio-economic class. Rules and laws formed a substructure of the slave-trade and regulated the legal position of the slave. In contrast with this, the colonial slave was not regarded as a person at all.[28] A colonial slave had neither legal rights nor position; was excluded from societal life and was used and treated as a mere thing, an article which could be bought and sold at a profit. The European colonists rationalized their enslavement of Africans by arguing that blacks were not entirely human. The European culture associated black with evil, fear and darkness - thus precisely the opposite of christian purity, christian fairness and the christian light. The slaves' indelible blackness furthermore provided the visible proof that they were actually meant to serve white masters.[29]

It is shown by Cornel West that the initial structure of modern discourse in the pre-Enlightenment era, pioneered by Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Descartes et al., already secreted the idea of white supremacy. Scientific investigation, Cartesian philosophy, Greek ocular metaphors, classical aesthetic and cultural ideals were then creatively fused in such a way that it ultimately constituted the essential elements of modern discourse in the West.[30] The significance of this "secretion" of the idea of white supremacy, is that it legitimated the enslavement of blacks both at an intellectual and moral level. There exists undoubtedly an indissoluble link between slavery and modern racism as a historical phenomenon, that is, as a pervasive ideology and comprehensive system of oppression.

Theo Witvliet rightly opposes analysts like Eric Williams who, in a pure Marxist frame of reference, reduce racism to being no more than the subsequent rationalization of black slavery as a form of economic exploitation, arguing that slavery was introduced for economic, not racial motives. To be sure, the historical content of racism - as a system of domination - was formed by the development of bourgeois capitalist society and the Western, colonial expansion which went with it. "Modern" racism (i.e. the moulding of notions into especially anthropological sciences) emerged when, in the framework of the formation of a world market and an integrated capitalist society, an archaic means of production like slavery was introduced in the New World. As a system of oppression, it aimed at the maximum exploitation of people of another culture and with a skin of a different colour. The ideology of white supremacy was

far more than just a rational justification of black oppression; it formed a sphere of conceptions, relatively autonomous of economic and political relationships, which derived its vitality (or rather, its mortality) from the institutional mechanism in which it was entangled.[31]

Against this background "modern" racism has, as an autonomous ideology, a profound influence on economic and political levels. The envelopment of the myth of white supremacy in racism aims to legitimize the subjugation and subordination of blacks. Making use of Winthrop Jordan's critical exposé of slavery in the Americas, Witvliet arrives at the conclusion that even before the introduction of slavery, there was already a conglomerate of prejudices and myths which made this practice socially acceptable. An underestimation of the material existence of this "many-headed monster" namely that it merely coincides with prejudice, ethnocentric arrogance or taken as an aberration of individual whites, is admittedly worse than the purely Marxist analysis. The question that remains is how is it that "the inhuman slave trade and slavery could be accepted so easily, and indeed specifically, by those who were filled with the highest humanitarian ideals."[32]

CONQUEST AND RESISTANCE

> "When the Dutch were put to death, you put up a loud cry. Would you cry for me if I were killed? ... I see that every white man is an enemy to the black and every black man an enemy to the white ... I believe you are as much an enemy as the Boers."
> - Chief Dingane to Rev. Owen on the Retief massacre, February 1838

It is argued in this section that the motive for the indigenous

peoples' resistance differed from that underlying the slave revolts. In 1659, the first of the two Khoi wars in the seventeenth century broke out in which all the Khoi groups of the Cape Peninsula were involved. Marks states that it is not generally realized how near the Khoi-Khoi were to success: by conducting elusive guerilla warfare they brought agricultural work in the small colony virtually to a standstill.[33] The DEIC's destructive impact on the Khoi-Khoi was gradual rather than cataclysmic. The expansion of the colonists in spite of protestation and the disregard for the Khoi-Khoi's traditional grazing lands, led to the outbreak of the Second Company-Khoi-Khoi War in 1673. In addition, from 1700 onwards the Company relaxed its control over the free burghers, who were then permitted to go inland and barter with Khoi-Khoi - a freedom that easily led to abuse.[34] Newton-King shows that these cattle trading expeditions of the advancing frontier men frequently tipped over into rading expeditions if the Khoi-Khoi became reluctant to barter a sufficient number of cattle on the terms offered.[35]

From the colonists' point of view, the most disastrous of the 'frontiers wars' of the eighteenth century broke out in 1799 when Khoi-san servants, who deserted from the farms with their masters' horses and guns, were joined by the Xhosa. The war was a cumulative reaction of the majority of Khoi-Khoi of the eastern districts to the colonial encroachment of the preceding three decades.[36] Vengeance as a motive featured strongly, but the Khoi leaders had largely adhered to the traditional practice of striking at an enemy's wealth rather than at his or her person. For their

acts of retribution the Khoi-Xhosa allies actually sought out individually those who were known for their cruelty.[37] The rebellion was crushed after four years of intermittent fighting.

The Struggle for the Land Continues

It would be misleading, Paul Maylam contends, to characterise the contact between the African communities and the colonists solely in terms of two monolithic race groups constantly at war. In certain zones various forms of interracial co-operation did take place. "Patterns of trade, military alliance, social and sexual interaction cut across racial differences."[38] The circumstance which triggered off the first War of Resistance (followed by seven others), must be understood against that socio-political reality. It is neither the intention nor is it possible to elaborate on the different wars which were waged. Concentrating on one particular conflict, namely, the Ncome River Battle, the intention is to illustrate how the traditional theme of vengeance operated within the African communities. For the indigenous people, colonialism meant the loss of land and the *raison d'être* of those wars was to retrieve the land. Therefore, a Christian political ethic that wishes to address this issue has to grow out of a contextual theology of the land. (Its characteristics will be detailed at the end of chapter two.) However, one needs to first understand how the established function of vengeance had been reshaped to cope with the colonial fact of dispossession.

'Blood River' Revisited

One of the most controversial and emotional stages of Afrikaner

history involves a victory over the Zulu army at the Ncome ('Blood') River in 1838. F.A. van Jaarsveld explains its significance against the backdrop of the Great Trek. Part of the Afrikaner stockfarmers community who lived on the Eastern frontier, left the Cape colony because they had to contend "with an insuperable hindrance in the form of the organised Bantu."[39] From their point of view the colonial government at the Cape pursued a weak, philanthropic policy of "equality between White and non-White" and could not protect the Afrikaner sufficiently. In a sense Hosea Jaffe (writing as "Mnguni") corroborates this view, for he argues that the existing anti-Xhosa wars of the British in the Eastern Province led to the Voortrekkers' flight from those life and death land-wars. The treks were therefore the result of fear of the Xhosa.[40] While Jaffe minimises the abolition of slavery in 1834 as a factor, one of the principal actors in this bloody drama, Piet Retief, stated in his Manifesto: "We complain to the severe losses which we have been forced to sustain by the emancipation of our slaves, and the vexatious laws which have been enacted respecting them." [41]

In 1830 the Zulu kingdom had been the most powerful state in Southern Africa. Its chief, Dingane, regarded the missions which were increasing among the Africans, as being there for the purpose of subduing his people by witchcraft. Moreover, the Zulu king had to cope with internal pressures and inherent tensions. Discontented groups fled from Zululand and took refuge in Port Natal where white traders had recently made their base. Dingane became convinced that his position was being "undermined by the white presence."[42]

Additionally, he was having to cope with a much larger contingent of whites impinging on his domain - the Voortrekkers. Dingane thus feared for the possible combined onslaught from his vengeful expatriates, the British neighbours who refused to sell him gunpowder, and the powerful advancing trekkers.

Piet Retief rode into the capital, Umgungundhlovu, on 7 November 1837 whereupon the Zulu king accused him of rustling a herd of royal cattle a month before. Retief in turn blamed Sekonyela, leader of the Batlokwa. In order to prove their innocence, the Boers had to retrieve the stolen cattle, arrest Sekonyela and bring him back to the capital. Retief, however, had no intention of delivering Sekonyela to Dingane for punishment.[43] To grasp the extent of the Afrikaner leader's error, one has to understand that 'bringing back the body' (*ukubuyisa isidumbu*) was pivotal within the Zulu traditional ideology of vengeance. In its proto form it embodied a feeling of anger, hurt and revenge when a member of one's district was injured or killed. (In this instance the insult was the theft of royal cattle.) Often retribution could not be exacted immediately and the feud came to be referred to as a debt - *isikweleti*.[44] Possibly this traditional ideology of vengeance, along with the other above-mentioned factors, stirred up Dingane's anger and fear when Retief violated the agreement to bring back Sekonyela.

Early in February 1838 Piet Retief's party of one hundred men returned to hand over the cattle and also to obtain permission to settle in Natal. In Dingane's eyes that commando was an army, and on his orders ("Bulalani abagati!" - Kill the wizards), the whole

party was massacred on the slopes of Kwa Matiwane, after the king had glibly signed a document in which he 'ceded' all the land between the Tugela and the Umzimvubu to the Boers.[45] Through the Rev. Owen, he wrote to the Cape Governor that he had to kill Retief's party because they had come as an army to him. He followed up this victory by attacking the Boer camps - yet another act in an evolving circle of vengeance.

On Sunday, 9 December 1838, the Boers, now commanded by the competent military tactician, Andries Pretorius, made a solemn vow to God that if a victory was granted over the Zulus, they would build a church and keep the day of Battle as one of thanksgiving for ever. A perfect defensive position was found at the Ncome River, and their spiritual leader, Sarel Cilliers, saw the hand of God in the provision of such a strong hold.[46] The Zulu attack on 16 December 1838, was suicidal (more than 3 000 impis died) and not a single Boer had been killed. In the words of Oliver Ransford: "The wheel of retribution had turned full-circle: Retief and the women and children of the Great Murder had been avenged."[47]

For the Afrikaners the notion of land acquired a religious dimension. A strong sense of having been chosen developed. They had been called by God, like Israel from Egypt, and were entering the land of Canaan. Thus, instead of recognizing that the victory at the Ncome had been a remarkable demonstration of military strategy, the event became wrapped in an aura of divine providence. In 1887 the British annexed Zululand to the 'Colony of Natal'. The establishment of the Boer Republics 'Orangia' and 'The South African

Republic' occurred at the end of "a century of frontier wars and skirmishes as blacks defended what they had against whites wanting what they had: land."[48]

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCHES IN CONQUEST

> We won our Christianity, our faith ... not because of the example afforded by white Christians, but in spite of it.
> - James Baldvin

The Advent of the Foreign Missionaries

The first missionary to arrive at the Cape was Georg Schmidt, a Moravian from the religious community of Hernnhut in 1737, who established a mission station among the Khoi-Khoi at Genadendal ('Vale of Grace'). After experiencing frustrations and disappointments, he was forced to leave in 1743. In 1792 the Moravians were allowed to resume their activities, and by the middle of the nineteenth century the mission comprised seven stations on the Hernnhut pattern: self-supporting enclosed settlements where the 'heathen' could learn skills etc. According to Hope and Young this pattern of converting Africans from one way of life to another and establishing new communities where they were to remain for the rest of their lives, became a permanent feature in South African missionary work.[49] By the 1820s the phenomenal growth of missionary work at the Cape was evident by the number of missionaries who had arrived from various European societies.

Scholars perceive the missionaries' involvement with indigenous people (which actually aggravated an already complex situation) rather divergently. Templin, Hope, Young et al. have no problem in

regarding missionaries such as Johannes Vanderkemp and Dr. John Philip as "champions of the oppressed". (These missionaries influenced the government to issue Ordinance 50 which in principle stressed equal justice for all people. Philip also published a book delineating charges of white cruelty, and the Rev. Read's accusations led to the so-called Black Circuit trials against white farmers). Others like Villa-Vicencio, Cochrane, Cuthbertson, Hosea Jaffe and Nosipho Majeke portray them as agents who worked in the interests of British imperialism.

Majeke describes a "remorseless process of peaceful penetration" by the missionary who first approaches the chief humbly, "Bible in hand", and asks for a small piece of land to set up his mission station. "At his heel hastens the trader, the purveyor of cheap goods..." In due course an 'agreement' on land between the chief and the governor follows and the invaded tribes "are split asunder; 'divide and rule' under the capable hands of the missionaries carries on its deadly work of disruption". Throughout this period, the missionaries are at hand, preparing the way and disarming the chiefs with their message of God's peace. Thus they make easy the negotiations between the governor and the chief; they act as the governor's advisers and assist in drawing up the terms of the 'treaties'. They become interpreters and 'peace-makers' while at the same time they are military advisers to the invaders.[50]

Majeke's basic premise is that the British did not abolish slavery out of humanitarian or philanthropic concern for the slaves, but that the old shackles of feudalism had to be thrown off in favour

of a modern economic system. Thus, the vast network of missionary activity must be viewed as part of a great historical movement: the expansion of capitalism.[51] A missiological historian like J.C. Adonis is clearly reluctant to reduce the conversion of the blacks to being a mere cog in the imperialist machine, but he does recognise the ambivalent role of the missionary. Many missionaries, he claims, preached a kind of white supremacy and did not at all distinguish between the proclamation of the gospel and the expansion of British culture.[52]

Hope and Young display the kind of romantic naiveté that does not take seriously the captivity of the English-speaking missionaries to British imperialism.[53] More recently, in progressive theological circles, the role of mission and missionaries is increasingly being critiqued in negative terms. For Cuthbertson, the latter were harbingers of capitalist exploitation and prime-movers in the expansion and consolidation of white political power, who used and defended colonial violence. In fact, the process of 'conversion' should be regarded as violent, as it constituted the initial phase in the subversion of societies by Europeans.[54] The dynamics of conversion, Cochrane points out, did not occur in a sphere of neutrality, untouched by political, economic or ideological developments. It was a religious onslaught that "reinforced the confusion, break-down and victimization - even inferiority - that land loss and political pressures created".[55] He admits that education at the mission schools had its value, but it also functioned ideologically as it determined the position of Africans in a racist and capitalist society.[56]

In a real sense the missionaries were a source of social disruption and dislocation. Not only did they condemn African customs, culture and institutions, but also removed their converts to isolated mission stations. An appreciation of the evangelical motives thus becomes blurred by the overall implications and effects of their endeavours. Because they had harboured an attitude of Eurocentric superiority, Villa-Vicencio argues, their social paternalism and cultural arrogance led to "the systematic disintegration of cultural and political cohesion which was probably the most destructive function performed by the missionaries in Africa."[57]

The English-speaking churches' condemnation of African traditions cannot be regarded as a mere passing phase in ecclesial history. This Eurocentric impingement upon indigenous culture contributed to the physical, mental and religious repression of black people. Theologically speaking this version of missionary endeavour is a far cry from the scriptural notion of the *missio Dei* to which the Church is called. Paul, the first Christian missionary, remains the model against whom all missionaries in foreign contexts should be tested. The book of Acts relates how, for instance, he addressed the Stoic philosophers of Athens, after noticing that the city was "full of idols":

> Men of Athens! I see that in many ways you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: To an Unknown God. Now what you worship as something unknown, I am going to proclaim you.
> - Acts 17:22,23 (NIV).

Because the missionaries and their churches accommodated the op-

pressive powers, they approached the indigenous people in a totally different spirit. Instead of establishing a true community of Christ, they collaborated in the exploitation of people by people. At this level theological vengeance means that the quest for economic justice vis-à-vis the colonial history, too cannot be overlooked by the English-speaking churches. (We return to this ethical maxim in the final chapter.)

African Faith

In view of the missionaries' rejection of indigenous customs, a closer look needs to be taken at African religion. It is only then that the missiological debate will bring out a full historical relief. The activities of the missionaries constituted an infringement upon the traditional African ways of worshipping God. The fact that the vast majority of them were instrumental in the imperialist subjugation of the indigenous people, means that a theology of wrath has to rediscover the values - cultural as well as theological. In this regard theological vengeance seeks to rid black religion of those concepts and customs espoused in the so-called main-line churches, that alienate Africans from their own traditions.

Desmond Tutu emphasises that long before the arrival of the whites, the indigenous people believed in a Supreme Divine Being, alternately worshipped as Modimo, Mdale, Qamata and Mwelinzane. The Great One is omnipotent, the Creator of everything that exists. Because God is totally different from her/his creation, human beings can only approach God with the utmost reverence. In abstract

terms, God's transcendence is highlighted. In times of great disaster e.g. a never-ending drought, the approach to this Supreme Being would be mostly direct, but normally the ancestors, that is, the living dead or 'badimo', were assigned a mediatory role. The missionaries should have known better than to deprecatorily call this cult of the badimo 'ancestral worship'. Indeed, the ancestors need remembrance of their descendants in order to curb their oblivion and thus ascertain their personal immortality. For both the Israelite and the African, Tutu argues, death constitutes no absolute finality. Drawing parallels between the indigenous and biblical world view, he questions the "missionary strategy" to reject African values and traditional customs *in toto*.[58] Naturally, there were exceptions, for instance Bishop Colenso of Natal.[59]

Gabriel Setiloane analyses the attributes of Modimo - the image of God among the Sotho-Tswana - in detail. Among other things, Modimo is One, Supreme ('Ea Qhoeng Tsa Dithaba'), Our Owner ('Mong'a rona'), invisible and unknown ('ga Oitsiwe'), source ('mothlobi'), enabler ('Montshi'), Mother ('Mme') in the bowels of the earth ('mosima o sa tlaleng'), praised as steadfast and just ('wa makgonthe 'a kgodi's kgokgo'). However, Setiloane cautions, "that experience is wholly misunderstood if it is not recognised as being an existential response to the "mysterium". The Sotho-Tswana make statements about MODIMO, but they are statements of here-and-now responses, not attempts to make rational sense of IT. IT is "mysterium", intangible, all-pervasive, at no point capable of definition ... whose very name is taboo to all but the few".[60]

To understand the relevance of African traditional religion, Itumeleng Mosala further explains, one must comprehend the significance of culture. "To speak of a people's religion is to speak of their history, and to speak of their history is to speak of their culture". African traditional religions reflect the point at which the historical development of the Africans was arrested and halted.[61] One of the basic problems, J.B. Ngubane observes, was that early missionaries "theologized according to their own cultural frames of reference, for any theologizing is "culture-bound, though Spirit-led". Consequently, African Christians found themselves in such a serious dilemma that a break with the mission churches became inevitable, which essentially meant their "spiritual freedom from mission control ... This freedom has allowed them to indigenize and Africanize the Church".[62]

The 'African Independent Churches' (actually an improper term) refer to themselves as Inkonso zabatu or Dikereke tsa batho, which literally means 'Churches of the People'. For them:

> the one enormous omission throughout the whole history that had been written by outsiders ... (was) the work of the Holy Spirit throughout history ... We believe that our Churches were founded by the Spirit. Why in the world should our African customs be regarded as heathen while European customs are regarded as Christian? [63]

These Churches of the People actively combat the nihilation of their traditions, especially at the level of spirituality. We therefore submit that a black theological ethic of vengeance needs to reassert the authentic African values and customs within the so-called main-line churches, that have been demonized and pushed

aside by the missionaries.

Calvinism Altered

It is necessary to examine the kind of Calvinism expounded by the Dutch Reformed churches in the colonial era. White Calvinists have justified their violent oppression of blacks in biblical terms. From the beginning they have drawn the lines of social and ecclesiastical separatism along racial lines. The question posed here is how black Calvinists should seek redress for the detriment caused by the white DRCs. This subsection is concerned with the vindication of authentic Calvinism. In the final part of the thesis attention is given to the vindication of God's honour and the responsibility of the DRCs to ascertain economic justice in South Africa.

During the entire period of 1652-1795, the Calvinistic Dutch Reformed Church (DRC or Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk - NGK) enjoyed the status of state church in the Cape colony. The link between the DRC and the government effectively silenced the prophetic voice of Calvinism during the early colonial period. Except for the private initiative of certain individuals, very little actual missionary activity was carried out among the autochthonous population between 1652 and 1824. For Adonis a major factor which influenced the DRC negatively in terms of its missionary work, "was the racist attitude and behaviour of the Cape Whites".[64]

Reformed scholars like Ntoane, Templin and Adonis do not hesitate to show that the original settlers went to South Africa not for religious, but for economic reasons. The Boers saw the Khoi-Khoi

primarily as a source of labour. For the first hundred years of the European settlement, Templin says, it was assumed that adherence to the Christian faith made a slave eligible for emancipation. The intent of this concept, however, was subverted because the profit motive dominated. Boers feared that to let one's slaves hear the Christian message would mean a loss of valuable labourers. "Consequently, in practice, it became common to deny the subjected peoples any instruction in the Christian faith so as to ensure continued service of the slaves or Khoikhoi".[65]

Even later in the first period of British rule from 1806-1875 both the DRC and the Anglican Church of the Province were subordinated to the Cape government. Chris Loff refers to the fact that the colonial government reserved the right to involve itself in Church affairs in such a way that all church decisions were first to be approved by the civil authority before they could be enforced. A political commissioner represented the government at all church meetings. Loff suggests that even before 1824 (when the first DRC Synod was held at the Cape), the practice of racial discrimination was not repudiated by the Church. "It was simply prevented from expressing its mind by the Kommissaris Politiek."[66] The infamous resolution of 1857 that 'the heathen' should enjoy their Christian privileges in a separate building or institution, was the ultimate outcome of an age-old perpetuation of racist practices within the church. Race, instead of the Calvinistic 'faith alone' (*sola gratia*), became the condition for admission to the Church. Black members were therefore asked "to be the least and leave the church".[67]

Important in understanding the rise of Afrikaner Calvinism, which was a deviation from the reformed tradition, is that when the DRC at the Cape had gained its autonomy from the mother church in Holland by 1824, it became free from Calvinistic control.[68] The great trek itself had far-reaching effects on the mental outlook and the theological interpretations of the Boers during their expansion across the frontier wilderness. There was practically no educated theological leadership on the frontier for two centuries. Doctrinal modifications, in particular the Calvinist idea of the elect people, occurred. Templin asserts that when the Afrikaners made their covenant with God, they believed they were a special people in God's sight.

> The Afrikaners' understanding of, and use of, the Calvinistic doctrine of election was scarcely what the Genevan Reformer had envisaged or what the leaders at Dort had attempted to make specific. Rather, their interpretation of themselves as elect or chosen was always a permutation, an adaptation of the original doctrine, taken from the invisible realm of high theology, transformed radically, and returned to the ethnic context of Old Testament narrative. [69]

Lebakeng Ntoane examines the Afrikaner churches' notion of creation and infers that their version of Calvinism should be identified as being an ideologized theology. It is a faith tradition that should be "thrown overboard with contempt. From its early beginnings ... it has only sown seeds of death".[70] In essence Villa-Vicencio arrives at the same conclusion after considering the inception of "the theology of apartheid". The "ideological Afrikaners", he says, believed that the purpose of God's creation meant a preservation of their God-given identity, culture, and tradition. "Thus we find a form of Calvinism practised and preached as a jus-

tification of apartheid which is neither of Calvin nor of God."[71] The Afrikaner churches thus initiated and nurtured a distorted version of authentic Calvinism which, as an unbiblical pot-pourri of theological notions, Afrikaner culture and ideological ideals, aimed at rationalizing and justifying their subjugation of Southern Africa's indigenous people. The dispossession itself, as some land-wars (notably the Ncome River Battle), became enshrouded in a colonial quasi-theology on the providence of God.

De Gruchy's perception that Calvinism in South Africa needed to be "revitalized" as a theology of social criticism and transformation, is appropriate. He submits that while Calvinism has often been blamed for "the ills of South Africa", it should be re-examined and at least qualified. In reaction to Afrikaner Calvinism, which is not "necessarily the most faithful representation of the theology of John Calvin", two streams of Calvinist protest eventually emerged during the twentieth century, namely (i) a confrontation of traditional Afrikaner Calvinism within Afrikanerdom itself and (ii) Black Calvinism as radical critique. "Indeed, the Word of God has become the source of prophetic critique unmasking the pretensions of racism and injustice."[72]

Apart from this perversion of authentic Calvinism by the white DRCs, the imperialist role of most of the English-speaking missionaries, rejecting the aboriginal religion and culture indiscriminately, amounted to, as Mercy Oduyoye phrases it, "a theology of soul-snatching."[73] Black Christians need to ask themselves then what does this mean theologically. An ethic of vengeance seeks to

counter the legitimation of the colonial act of land robbery by these churches with affirmative African values and ideals. However, from a historical perspective an exposé of a contextual theology of the land will be premature at this stage. Though the autochthonous people were already militarily subjugated by the second half of the nineteenth century, their landlessness was politically constitutionalized only during the twentieth century. That history unfolds in chapter two, where the theme of landlessness is explored theologically.

It becomes clear that the taciturnity, and at times, active complicity of most of the official churches during the long process of the enslavement of so many third world countries, constitutes one of the ugliest chapters in the history of Christendom. In her "Africa: My Native Land", published in 1913, A.C. Dube reflects on both the pain and longing associated with landlessness:

> How beautiful are thy hills and thy dales!
> I love thy very atmosphere so sweet,
> Thy trees adorn the landscape rough and steep -
> No other country in the whole world
> could with thee compare.
> It is here where our noble ancestors,
> Experienced joys of dear ones and of home;
> Where great and glorious kingdoms rose and fell
> Where blood was shed to save thee,
> thou dearest Land ever known
> But, Alas! their efforts were all in vain,
> For today others claim thee as their own ... [74]

CHAPTER TWO

FROM MOHANDAS K GANDHI TO NELSON ROLIHLAHLA MANDELA

Hypotheses

1. The introduction of Gandhian nonviolent resistance was in part to curb the historical manifestations of black vindictiveness.
2. African Nationalism embarked on both nonviolent resistance and an armed struggle, while Black Consciousness (i.e. the youth) concentrated on the emancipation of the mind of the oppressed. In contrast, revenge materialized in the forms of the Poqo- and necklace-methods.
3. The struggle of the indigenous people was essentially an effort to regain control over the land. An ethic of vengeance needs to grow out of a black, restorative theology of the land.

There is a sense in which Gandhi and Mandela came to symbolize two opposite strategies for the liberation struggle in South Africa. The former, staying for twenty-one years (1893-1914), took a considerable time in establishing his philosophy of Truth-force or nonviolent resistance, before leaving for India. The latter felt compelled to wage an armed struggle after the organisation to which he belonged had been committed to nonviolent protest for nearly fifty years. Both claimed a just basis for their divergent methods. Over against this moral realm there were those who avenged themselves in a bloody way on white people and 'collaborators'. Both opposed that option. In its stead, their strategies dominated events during the 1980s, either as incompatible alternatives or complimentary methods.

THE BIRTH OF SATYAGRAHA

> Jesus was an Asiatic. If he was reborn and went to South Africa today and lived there, he would have to live in a ghetto.
>
> The only way to avenge murder is to offer oneself as a willing sacrifice, with no desire for retaliation.
> - Mohandas K. Gandhi

The atrocities visited on the indentured Indian workers during the nineteenth century in South Africa, engendered bitterness. *Satyagraha*, the school of thought that enhances passive resistance, seeks to channel black rage constructively. Initially Gandhi's method of nonviolent resistance was exclusivist in nature, but it became progressively an accepted feature in the struggle for human rights.

Early in 1893 a young lawyer, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, had been hired by the Porbunder branch of Dada Abdullah's firm to assist in a law suit against a Transvaal merchant. Born as a British-protected subject in Western India on 2 October 1869, Ghandi was a member of the Modh Bania sub-caste of the Vaisyas, who pursued peaceful paths. His characteristic distaste for all violence, Polak, Brailsford and Pethick-Lawrence explain, flowed from his caste-origin and an upbringing which embraced the practice of fasting and prayer for self-purification and the taking of religious vows as a method of self-discipline.[1] However, Gandhi, as Mark Juergensmeyer puts it, had not always been a Gandhian. During these early years he displayed shyness and lack of confidence, but "zeal and a cause dissolved his timidity and loosened his tongue."[2] Soon after his arrival he personally experienced what it was like to be socially

and politically oppressed in South Africa. In his autobiography, written later in India, he expressed the conviction that:

> The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial - only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice. [3]

Maureen Swan's observation is that for the greater part of Gandhi's twenty-one years stay in South Africa, he became involved primarily in the politics of the commercial elite who by then had already defined the relations between them and the ex-indentured and indentured workers in no uncertain way.[4] On 22 August 1894, the Natal Indian Congress (NIC, with Gandhi as its secretary) was founded and because of its open membership policy, western educated white collar Indian workers (the "new elite" - many of whom were Christian) became members from its inception. At this stage the South African War (Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902) broke out and he felt that the Indian community, having stressed its pride in British citizenship, should recognize its responsibilities in the crisis. Against the views of many compatriots, he persuaded about 1100 Indians, including 800 indentured workers, to serve as non-combatants in an Indian Ambulance Corps. The rationale behind the decision was to dispel the opinion held against the Indians that "they went to South Africa only for money-grabbing and were merely a dead-weight upon the British. Like worms which settle inside wood and eat it up hollow, the Indians were in South Africa to fatten themselves."[5]

Louis Fischer comments that Gandhi hoped that the fortitude of the

Indians in the war would appeal to South Africa's sense of fair play and help to moderate white hostility. Further repressive measures were passed instead.[6] In the light of this development, Gandhi became convinced that the cause to improve the conditions of South Africa's Indians was lost, and in October 1901 he sailed for India with the intention to settle there permanently. Whilst unsuccessfully attempting to participate in Indian nationalist politics at the highest level, the NIC requested him to return which he did towards the end of 1902.

In June 1903 Gandhi started a newspaper *Indian Opinion* and during 1904 he created a communal settlement at Phoenix. Throughout 1894 to 1906 the tactics which the Congress used, with Gandhi as their chief strategist, were those of polite constitutional protest. A definite watershed in the making of Gandhian thought occurred during the Bambata Rebellion of 1906 (4 000 Africans were killed). Again he organised an Ambulance Corps which "consisted only in nursing the wounded Zulus. The Boer War had not brought home to me the horrors of war with anything like the vividness that the rebellion did. This was not war but a man-hunt." [7]

For Gandhi the direct consequence of this emotional involvement, had been "intense heart searchings".[8] Two important results emerged from these "heart searchings": one was the consolidation of his feelings about nonviolent methods of protest; the other was the need to renounce worldly life and to become an ascetic. Towards the end of 1906 he took the vow of *brahmacharya* (celibacy) for life. Pyarelal shows that the foundation of Gandhi's self-

training as a "nonviolent soldier", was the reliance on God. "The only weapon of the Satyagrahi is God by whatever name one knows Him".[9] The transformation that took place in Gandhi's psycho-physical attitudes is significant, because the change was to be manifest in his leadership of the Indian cause in the country from 1906 to 1914.

The change meant a shift from polite appeals to organised action. When the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of 1906 made registration compulsory, the Transvaal Indians, spearheaded by Gandhi, moved into action and protested publicly. Negotiations between Gandhi and general Smuts broke off eventually, followed by the burning of nearly 2 000 registration certificates and trade licences at the Fordsburg mosque on 16 August 1908. Since the commencement of *satyagraha* in the Transvaal in 1907 up till the middle of June 1910, over 3 000 individuals were imprisoned, of whom many hundreds were deported. Gandhi himself was detained.[10] Years later Bharatan Kumarappa declared that Gandhi derived his doctrine of *satyagraha* - which literally means "clinging to truth" - from various sources. It can be traced essentially to the Bhagavad Gita ideal of the *karmayogin*, and also to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, to the writings of Thoreau, Ruskin and more especially Tolstoy. "But his practical application of it in the social and political spheres was entirely his own".[11] Raghavan Iyer has correctly observed that Gandhi laid down the foundations of his thought during the pioneering days of his campaigns in South Africa.[12]

The 'Black Act' and the Workers' Struggle

An important link between indentured and free Indians had been a tax imposed by Act 17/1895 on those ex-indentured workers who elected to remain in Natal after the expiry of their indentures. It led to considerable hardship so that thousands were re-indentured. Out of this development grew the appointment of a commission and the negotiations between Smuts and Gandhi resumed. The Indian Relief Bill which was finally adopted in 1914, signalled the abolition of the Black Act. It is on the basis of this achievement that Gandhi, when he returned to India in January 1915, was "already being hailed as a *mahatma*".[13]

It is true that Gandhi's struggle had been confined to the interests of the Indians and (initially) more particularly those of the commercial elite, despite the nonracial and trans-religious tenets of his philosophy of life. Only in later years, after consistently experiencing the harshness of Afrikaner racism and the hypocrisy of British liberalism, the realization dawned that 'their' suffering was part and parcel of a much wider black oppressed community. It is important to contextualize the historical framework within which this specific struggle had been waged. In view of the reality of India being a British colonial state, the immigrants' socio-political aspirations were naturally based on the assumption that they, as British subjects, should be regarded and treated as such and their rights should therefore be secured. According to Louis Fischer, Gandhi wished to establish one principle: "that the Indians were citizens of the British Empire and therefore entitled to equality under its laws".[14]

Secondly, the graduality of his spiritual and political growth, deserves to be considered. His resolution during the Bambata Rebellion to observe *brahmacharya*, is an indication that previously, something vital was lacking. Gandhi's two books, namely, *My Experiments with Truth* and *Satyagraha in South Africa*, reveal essentially that his South African experience had been a cyclical history of suffering and spiritual growth. At the end of his stay, he concluded that Satyagrahis would have to suffer unto death; as a spirit of revenge is alien to *satyagraha*. It was, nonetheless, a philosophy that reckoned with the reality of violent situations in which counter-violence is the result. However, as Thomas Merton points out, the idea of the method of "Truth-force", was to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor together. For Gandhi that meant the cultivation of an inner spiritual freedom, that in turn would effect freedom from the desire for revenge.[15]

Within this construction of nonviolent resistance civil disobedience became the challenge for the Satyagrahi and cowardice was despised. Nonviolence was therefore not a sentimental evasion or denial of the reality of structural evil, and Gandhi warned that "one day the black races will rise like the avenging Attila against their white oppressors unless someone presents to them the weapon of *satyagraha*."[16] When he himself finally opened up his strategy to the indentured workers, he discovered the real dynamics of it. A retrospective view of the defiance campaigns during the 1950s and the eighties, shows that nonviolent struggle became an integral part of the programme of national resistance. The following subsection shows to what extent this philosophy of nonviolence influ-

enced modern black politics.

BLACK NATIONALISM, AFRICANISM, AND WILD JUSTICE

> Thy vengeance, o God, is too slow! We are fed-up with the white man's camouflage, his hypocrisy, his policy of pinpricks in 'the land of our forefathers'
> - James S. Thaele, 1923.

> I would rather see South Africa poor but white than rich and mixed.
> - Hendrik F. Verwoerd.

This section is concerned with the shift from the aboriginal wars of resistance to political action as a response to the on-going European conquest of the land. Central to an understanding of that conversion is an assessment of African nationalism which emerged even before the last frontier wars were being fought. A new class of Africans, influenced by the development of a nonracial constitution at the Cape, Christian missions, and economic integration, recognised the futility of war as a means of political contest.[17]

Writers such as Meli, Odendaal, Benson, Walshe, Bundy, Denoon, Karis and Carter locate the genesis of African nationalism in the nineteenth century. The formation of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1912 was the ultimate embodiment of earlier manifestations of a new political awareness. Its growth could be noted at various levels:

1. *Labour:* The discovery of diamonds and gold generated a new social force - the working class. Strikes, walk-outs, and withdrawals of labour, although small in scale and unco-ordinated, signified a growing working-class consciousness. Migrant labour to the mines and urban areas thus occurred with

the emergence of an African urban proletariat.[18]

2. *Rural Developments:* Tribal authority became redundant as traditional ideals were revolutionised and Africans were absorbed in the capitalist and western political orders. Simultaneously the leadership changed hands: from the tribal authorities (for courts gradually took over many of their functions), to the new educated elite. Traditional political leadership, Colin Bundy maintains, was "overtly opposed and restricted by the imperial, colonial and missionary interests."[19] Increasingly, chiefs could only exercise land allocation rights over land secured in the first instance from the government. The distributive tenets of precolonial Nguni society were effectively halted by land scarcity and replaced by a spirit of competition for land and resources.[20]

3. *Political activity.* While Cape policy offered a limited opportunity for participations in a common citizenship, the Boer Republics (with their "no equality in Church or State" clause) and Natal established "constitutional and practical barriers to any comparable involvement and in this way aroused African self-consciousness through protest."[21] In 1882 a small group in the Transkei formed a political organisation, *Imbumba Yama Afrika*, followed in 1884 by the Native Education Association and the Native Electoral Association in the eastern Cape Colony. They aimed to work with and through the institutions of the white-dominated colonial political system in order to organise for representation of African interests.[22]

4. *Journalism.* In 1876 *Isiqidimi Sama Xosa* (The Xhosa Messenger) became the first paper under African editorship, launched by

the Rev. Elijah Makiwane. He was succeeded in 1881 by Tengo Jabavu who frequently elucidated the balancing power of the African vote on the Cape common role. Founding his own paper, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, Jabavu unsuccessfully opposed the Voters' Registration Bill of 1887 which effectively denied tribal Africans the vote, but he did manage to centralize questions of the franchise.[23]

5. *Religion.* The first African convert, Ntsikana, recognised Christianity's ambiguity. He "foresaw the damage it might do to African societies, and warned people of this. That was his prophecy, his greatness."[24] The first trained Xhosa missionary, Tiyo Soga, had also been torn between his enthusiasm for African tradition and an admiration for Christian morality.[25] Another outstanding figure was Nehemiah Tile who established the independent Thembu church in 1883. For Francis Meli that independent African church signified a political protest movement seeking to escape the reality of colonial rule. "All men and women were equal and black; there was no white racist control."[26] By the close of the 19th century, dissident African Christians could also find a spiritual home in the Ethiopian Church of Mangena Mokone and James Dwane where the vision of self-determination and black assertiveness was kept alive.

Two African approaches to politics became apparent: the dominant belief in nonracial representation and Ethiopianism, whose main thrust was to challenge the white hegemony through exclusivist black unity.[27] The common determinant underlying these divergent actions, was the will to defeat the forces of colonialism and

racist paternalism. This should be seen as the root of African nationalism.[28]

At the turn of the century the South African or Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 broke out in which tens of thousand of Africans, spurred on by the British government's promises of equal privileges, participated in non-combatant and combatant roles. Ironically, their participation raised on both sides the spectre of 'a Native uprising'. The Imperial guarantees also gave impetus to political activity through small groups that sprang up in all four colonies. Among them were the Natal Native Congress, initiated in 1900, and the African People's Organisation in 1902, of which Dr. Abdurahman became the president in 1905.[29] After the South African War it was evident that the British had no intention of fulfilling their promises. Disillusionment therefore became a source of bitterness, frustration and a desire to wreak vengeance on the colonists. This resulted in the Bambata Rebellion in which several white farmers and magistrates were killed.[30] The exhortations of two Ethiopian prophets such as 'You must drive the white man off your land, his blood must flow' and 'There must not be one white man alive when the sun sets' also nearly culminated in a revolt at Taungs.[31] Thus political revenge, occurring in embryonic forms, became a phenomenon that would assume a more organised shape in 1960s.

In contrast with vindictiveness, the dominant strand of African nationalism (tempered by nonracialism, Christian morality and the reality of economic integration) became the basis of the African National Congress, formed on 12 January 1912 (initially called the

South African Native National Congress). The need had arisen to co-ordinate and unify the flurry of local and regional political activities - mostly reactions to the draft South African Act. However, in terms of radicalism the activities of the Industrial and Commercial Union (ICU) surpassed those of the ANC during the 1920s. The latter organisation still found a class struggle through strikes and mass campaigns unacceptable. Incensed by an assault at the hands of a white constable, Clements Kadalie formed ICU on 17 January 1919. Soon Cape dock-workers were brought out on strike and in February 1920, 70 000 African gold miners stopped work.[32] It was a time when the false hopes of impending social justice were replaced by restiveness and despair, as all available means of constitutional protest were being exhausted. Apart from isolated instances of millenarian violence in which hundreds of Enoch Mgijima's Israelites and Abraham Morris's Bondelzwarts were killed, trade unionism as a militant tactic of extra-constitutional opposition emerged as the major political weapon.[33]

By 1927, when Kadalie could rely on the support of thousands of workers, he laid bare the possibility of racial warfare, due to the repressive nature of the Native Land Act:

> Denied all legitimate expression for his grievances and aspirations, who can blame the African if he takes what will seem to him the only possible path to freedom, if he comes to hate the white man (sic) as his oppressor, and if the attainment of justice and liberty comes for him to be a thing synonymous with the crushing of the civilization the white man has built up. [34]

While the ICU leaders' objective was clear in wanting a redistribution of economic and political power, "they seem to have lacked a

systematic theory of how economy and society function in South Africa".[35] And because of that weakness, their protest became ineffectual, despite numerical strength.

Documentation by Karis and Carter further shows that the 1920s and 1930s were basically unfruitful years for the ANC. Although Garveyism was brought into its ranks by James Thaele, Brandsby Ndobe, Elliot Tongeni and Josiah Gumede - stimulating racial self-consciousness through the popularized slogan 'Africa for the Africans' - Congress failed to establish the mass-based kind of political organisation achieved by Garvey in the United States. At the same time the membership of the South African Communist Party (the SACP, formed in 1921) became significant by 1929-30. The Party recruited essentially semi-literate African labourers over whom the ANC had exercised little influence "and who were looking for organisational guidance as the ICU went into rapid decline."[36]

In 1934 the two leading white parliamentary parties, namely, the South African Party and the Nationalists, combined to form the United Party. Whatever their differences, there was basic agreement to preserve white supremacy. Saul Dubow expresses the view that they drew on the segregationist ideas of English-speaking intellectuals like Pim, Evans, Loram and Brookes, who were influenced by the pseudo-scientific doctrines of social Darwinism emphasizing 'racial purity', and Jim Crow legislation of the American South. It was argued that so long as the Cape franchise of Africans continued to exist, it would be impossible to establish a uniform policy of land segregation throughout the Union. A process was therefore

set up to exclude Africans altogether from the common society. Anticipating this development, black leaders such as the Rev. Z.R. Mahabane, Dr. A.B. Xuma and Selope Thema, inaugurated a forum in December 1938, called the All-African Convention.[37]

In the meantime the younger members of the ANC grew impatient with those traditional methods of protest and after deliberations with the leadership, a Congress Youth League (CYL) was formally constituted in April 1944. The Youth Leaguers distinguished between two streams of African Nationalism, a distinction that explains the basic moral difference between the later violence of the ANC and that of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). According to the CYL's Manifesto one stream of African Nationalism was "extreme and ultra-revolutionary" and based on the cry "Hurl the white man into the sea!" The Youth Leaguers regarded their version of African Nationalism as "moderate", accentuating the fact that they were not against white people as such, but "totally and irrevocably" opposed to white domination.[38]

An important factor in the radicalisation of Congress along non-violent lines, was the presidency of Chief Albert Lutuli. During the stay-at-home campaign in 1951 thousands went to prison voluntarily, encouraged by Lutuli, singing: 'Thina Sizwe! Thina Sizwe esi ntsundu' -

> We cry for our land.
> They took it. They took it.
> Europeans
> They must let our country go. [39]

By 1955 the tradition of nonracialism which had been part of the

ideological basis of the ANC since its inception, came to the fore. About 3 000 delegates representing the ANC, SAIC, the Coloured People's Congress, the white Congress of Democrats, and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), gathered in Kliptown on 25-26 June to constitute the Congress of the People. In contrast with this broad unfolding of basic political ideals (nonviolence and nonracialism) Africanist dissent coalesced around a group of Youth Leaguers in Soweto, led by Potlake Leballo, Zeph Mothopeng, A.P. Mda and Peter Raboroko. Their criticism centred upon a clause in the Freedom Charter that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it" and the role Congress allowed whites to play. On breaking away from the ANC, they inaugurated the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania in 1959, and elected Mangaliso Sobukwe as president.[40] The PAC launched a peaceful campaign which ended abruptly when the police opened fire on defiers at Sharpeville, killing 69, and Langa, near Cape Town. On 8 April 1960 both the ANC and the PAC were banned.[41] Amidst a Union-wide state of emergency prime minister Verwoerd, the 'architect of apartheid' (H. Kenney's phrase), unilaterally established the Republic of South Africa on 31 May 1960. It was that show of *kragdadigheid* (violent repression) that constituted a turning point for the ANC regarding its traditional commitment to nonviolence. "If naked force was to crush every peaceful demonstration, it was futile to rely on nonviolent methods."[42] Mandela and some others who came together in June 1961, established *Umkhonto we Sizwe* ('Spear of the Nation'). PAC members, rejecting Umkhonto's option for sabotage, formed *Poqo* (meaning 'pure', 'we-go-it-alone'). In an effort to realise the vision of Sobukwe, who had been detained after the Sharpeville massacre, Poqo embarked

upon a programme to eliminate people who were regarded as collaborators of the state.[43]

Mokgethi Motlhabi's social-ethical scrutiny of the actions of these independent off-shoots of the ANC and PAC, underlines a fundamental difference. Unlike Umkhonto, he maintains, Poqo "does not seem to have examined the moral significance or implication of its violence."[44] Determined to wreak vengeance on the white oppressors and their collaborators, Poqo displayed no scruples about taking lives. It should be stated that this stance was attributable to a variety of factors: Firstly, the experience of a profound sense of hopelessness. They were people who

> had been forced off the land, whose families were being subjected to all forms of official harassment as well as economic deprivation, who perceived every relationship with authority in terms of conflict: whether at the work-place, in the compound, or in the reserve. These were men who had no place to turn to. [45]

However, these cannot be regarded as the exclusive experiences of Poqo members. Secondly, whereas Umkhonto could still rely on Nelson Mandela as a continuing presence, the post-Sharpeville PAC or Poqo missed the intellectual guidance of the detained Sobukwe.[46] As the principal ideologue of controlled political violence, Mandela claimed that Umkhonto's struggle was morally just. His articles, speeches and trial addresses are void of vindictiveness, and a reading of Fatima Meer's biography confirms this. At the Rivonia Trial of 1963, Mandela explained his cause:

> I do not deny that I planned sabotage. I did not plan it in a spirit of recklessness, nor because I have any love

> of violence. I planned it as a result of a calm and sober assessment of the political situation that had arisen after many years of tyranny, exploitation, and oppression of my people by the whites. [47]

In fact, he found the "primitive brutality" of Poqo reprehensible. It should be noted that Robert Sobukwe himself shunned violence. A reading of his speeches makes this clear:

> I say quite positively, without fear of contradiction, that the only people who will benefit from violence are the government and the police ... We are not gambling. We are taking our first step in the march to African independence and the United States of Africa. And we are not leading corpses to the new Africa. We are leading that youth, not to death, but to life abundant. [48]

A climate of hate for white people had been perpetuated in PAC circles even at its founding convention. An "aggressive and vengeful mood" was conveyed in the inaugural speeches and many of its members made "crude racist statements."[49] It is argued here that Sobukwe exploited the legitimate bitterness of the oppressed in such a way that he created a dynamic tension between black rage and political apocalyptism, without reverting to millenarian acts of violence. His successor Leballo, lacking this essential ingenuity, released the creative tension in uncontrollable modes of revenge.

The hiatus following the banning of the ANC and PAC, was filled during the late sixties by the Black Consciousness Movement. Its core consisted of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) initiated by black students who were dissatisfied with their position in multi-ethnic associations, and the later Black People's Convention (BPC). Crucial to an understanding of the movement, was

their insistence on "speaking for ourselves".[50] Whites, "alienated and insulated from us ... cannot possibly feel ... what it actually means to be Black in this country."[51]

The liberation struggle thus acquired a new dimension: one in which a particular psychological attitude was being postulated.[52] An early proponent, Barney Nyameko Pityana, called the accent on black awareness, self-reliance, and group cohesion an inward-looking process:

> The urgency of the moment is that we have to liberate the mind of the black man (sic) ... to pump life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth. [53]

During the early seventies black consciousness (BC) became widely accepted as a philosophical base by several black organisations and institutions, including many in the fields of theatre and drama, music, and youth groups. SASO concentrated on the role of education in the community.[54] The broader movement was also drawn into the labour problem by the strike wave of 1972-73.[55] Another specific area of concern, suggests Ben Khoapa, was the intensification of the Bantustan-scheme over the period 1970-72, securing the total segregation of the African population into ethnic groups "living apart and having separate political rights."[56] Its spiritual emphasis became manifested in a Black Theology Project, originally initiated by the Rev. Sabelo Ntwasa and Dr. Basil Moore of the University Christian Movement (UCM). It was the spiritual dimension that changed BC into more than a political ideology:

> It was a reawakening of Black people in South Africa to their value as human beings and their dignity as God's children and creatures ... Through it black people were to affirm their recognition of the fact that their condition was not intended by God, but was a deliberate creation of man. (sic) [57]

The South African government had at first encouraged the BC movement and tried to absorb it into their existing structure of 'separate development'. Soon it began to perceive BC as a threat as was evident by the spate of bannings in 1973-74 and the large-scale detentions of SASO and BPC leadership towards the end of 1974.[58] During this period the number of political detainees who died while in police custody, increased markedly.

Though the movement did not organise the Soweto uprising in June 1976, the impact of its philosophy was undeniable. Black assertiveness was clearly operative in the students' demonstrations against the Verwoerdian system of education.[59] The sociological studies of John Kane-Berman, Allan Brooks and Jeremy Brickhill locate the anger of the students within a broader political and economic framework. The inherent logic of government policy, reducing blacks in 'white South Africa' to temporary sojourners, they argue, was bound to cause hardship and dissatisfaction. Rising unemployment, housing shortage, overcrowding, the conditions in the townships, malnutrition and the systemic harassment of thousands under the pass laws, all amounted to a wide range of inter-related, destructive, socio-economic factors.[60] "The 1976 explosion was inevitable, and it had been stoked up over a long period by the

government's approach."[61]

Throughout 1977 there were repeated skirmishes between students and police across the country, resulting in the death of over six hundred - most of them black schoolchildren. In September 1977 the "government's wrath" (to use Motlhabi's phrase) culminated in the killing of Stephen Bantu Biko. On October 19 all black consciousness affiliated organisations were abolished. Several individuals were either banned (Percy Qobosa, Beyers Naudé, Theo Kotze and others) or detained (Malusi Mpumlwana, Thenjiwe Mtinto, Kenny Rachidi and others).[62]

In order to determine the locus of my theme within BC, a selection of the writings of its chief protagonist, Steve Biko, was analysed. Biko envisaged psychological emancipation to be a singular purpose of black people, thus challenging the pent-up forces of the angry masses to meaningful and directional opposition. He regarded fear as dangerous as it hides underneath it "an immeasurable rage that often threatens to erupt. Beneath it, lies naked hatred for a group that deserves absolutely no respect."[63] In his contribution to the debate on black theology, Biko maintained that blacks have had enough experience as recipients of racism and do not wish to turn tables. Yet there were many who would like "to kick whites off those comfortable garden chairs ... and to claim them for themselves."[64]

In my view this apparent contradiction between the desire to exact vengeance and the refusal to do so, is grounded in Biko's bipolar

understanding of black reality. Biko acknowledged the quest for freedom on the one hand, and the lack of it in 'white South Africa' on the other - a schizoid reality which generates anger and hate. Vindictiveness toward whites per se, is neither an inherent black characteristic nor a widespread wish. It is a historical phenomenon which could be curbed by self-realization through control of the mind - the key element in the liberation struggle. A constitutional development that moved away from economic and socio-political deprivation, was also necessary. The irony is that the state had not only failed to grasp this dialectic between self-assertion and non-retaliation, but repeatedly detained him under section 6 of the Terrorism Act until his death. Biko wrote:

> I've got no doubt in my mind that people - and I know people in terms of my own background, where I stay - are not necessarily revengeful, nor are they sadistic in outlook. The black man (sic) has got no ill intentions for the white man. The black man is only incensed at the white man to the extent that he want to entrench himself in a position of power to exploit the black man. But beyond that, nothing more. [65]

The People's Courts

> The express train of white racism is now rushing at full speed on a collision course with the express train of black anger.
> - Donald Woods
>
> One settler, one bullet.
> - Slogan

The 1980s can rightly be called the era of popular protest, when broader-based mobilization climaxed in the defiance campaign of the Mass Democratic Movement in 1989. Instrumental to the struggle had been the "Standing for the Truth" campaign launched by the South African Council of Churches (SACC) during the previous year.[66]

Other important developments preceded the upsurge: Firstly, the exodus of thousands of young militants during the repression following the Soweto uprising, most of them joining the exiled ANC's Umkhonto we Sizwe. This resulted in increased guerilla activity between 1977-80, operating basically on the same humanistic argument of controlled political violence adopted in the sixties. The aim of the accelerated guerilla campaign, Martin Murray observes, seems to have been to select targets of strategic or economic importance, "thereby creating the maximum popular resonance and inspiring confidence amongst the black masses rather than sowing terror in the white community.[67]

The ferocity of the Soweto revolt led to the government's adoption of a 'total strategy'. Built upon the myth of 'the total onslaught orchestrated by Moscow', prime minister P.W. Botha and general Magnus Malan forged an all-embracing military dogma. The militarization of South African society (the 1986/87 budget showed an increase of 30% in defence spending) resulted in a peculiar kind of *quid pro quo* war between Umkhonto and the security forces.[68] Secondly, whereas the students' revolt overshadowed the period 1976-77, the rise of a militant, grassroots-based trade union movement emerged during the late seventies and early eighties.[69]

Politically, the eighties as an era of popular protest had been dominated by the United Democratic Front (UDF), established in 1983 as a response to a call made by Dr. Allan Boesak.[70] It differed ideologically from another anti-apartheid grouping, called the National Forum (NF) formed in the same year. The NF grew out of the

Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO, established in 1978), a development largely due to the abilities of prominent thinkers such as Dr. Neville Alexander and Saths Cooper.[71] The divergence (acceptance of the 1955 Freedom Charter in UDF circles and its rejection by the NF contingent is barometric) meant the pursuance of different strategic paths. It will be shown, however, that despite their points of difference which even led to violent clashes, both the UDF and AZAPO were in agreement with regard to the 'necklace'-method of the so-called people's courts.[72] Especially during the years 1985-87 popular vengeance took form in the 'necklacing' of those believed to be 'sell-outs'.

Black church leaders, the ANC, PAC, UDF and AZAPO all condemned its use on moral grounds. Frank Chikane rejected State President P.W. Botha's accusation that church leaders attached to the SACC "praise ... necklaces", as "highly defamatory ... and a deliberate distortion of the truth".[73] The Kairos-theologians' differentiation between revenge and permissible self-defence against aggressors and tyrants, contains an obvious allusion to the necklace-method:

> This is not to say that any use of force at any time by people who are oppressed is permissible simply because they are struggling for their liberation. There have been cases of killing and maiming that no Christian would want to approve of. [74]

This condemnation of the so-called people's courts cannot be appreciated in isolation. The black churches' judgment was steeped in its theological understanding of the crisis. Contrary to the white anthropocentrism of apartheid theology, the wholistic thrust of

black liberation theology envisaged, in the words of Boganjalo Goba, "a more humane and just society in which both black and white can discover the uniqueness of their humanity".[75] But theology must be cognizant of the peculiarities of the South African situation, and could "only be relevant if it responds to the human cries".[76] These socio-political structures, suggests Simon Maimela, constituted "a total system which negates my being as a person" and were "therefore life-denying".[77] After comparing the ideology of apartheid to the Aryanism of the Nazis, and identifying it as "equally vicious and equally blasphemous", Desmond Tutu infers that the most important thing about human beings is that they are created in the image of God and thus are endowed with infinite worth intrinsic to their being.[78]

The reverence for life is also a traditional African insight, as both Sigqibo Dwane and Manas Buthelezi point out. God the Creator of life (*uDali-bom*) liberates human beings from self-centredness and self-interest which undermine the quality of the God-given life as a corporate venture. The sacramental character of life is being contradicted by the conditions of powerlessness and despair that surround blacks. The vision of a humane world in which the true humanity of black people must be realized, is hindered by the structures of powerlessness.[79] Lebamang Sebidi lays stress on the all-pervasive nature of racism: "It leaves its victims hopelessly incapable of escaping from its dehumanising practices".[80] Thus, revenge by 'necklacing' directly contradicts the African notion of life as a corporate, sacramental quality and the indissoluble link black liberation theologians perceive between the *imago Dei* and

human dignity.

> There is nothing natural about sinning, about their (humans') tendency to destroy themselves and others. Indeed, if they were created to be evil ... God would have patted Cain on the back after he had killed his brother Abel. Indeed, the Creator would not be treating humans so differently from brute animals, and would not be making each and everyone morally accountable before him. But because God does this, it seems reasonable to conclude that sinning, killing and destroying each other is really unnatural for human beings; it is to fall below our human dignity because we were not created for unloving, uncaring and murderous relationships. [81]

I have argued elsewhere that the increased (and well-documented) state violence against the oppressed during the eighties produced "een voedingsbodem voor angst en bitterheid" (a fertile soil for white fear and black hate).[82] Magnus Malan's "total strategy" doctrine that led to states of emergency and police brutality further polarized South Africans and created not only physical misery and alienation, but also a climate in which the reverence for life was lost. The growing number of political assassinations and unsolved murders seemed to confirm the existence of officially-sanctioned 'death squads'. Yet another spiral of violence became visible as vigilante bands were formed to avenge the attacks on "the sell-outs".[83]

Monitor, journal of the Human Rights Trust, also condemns necklace killing, but then discusses the phenomenon in relation to the state's capital punishment by hanging (frequently handed down for politically-related offences). A. Koestler is quoted as delineating hanging as "the symbol of terror, cruelty and irreverence for life; the common denominator of primitive savagery ..." *Monitor*

concludes that while necklacing ruptures "our social fabric", the death penalty is plainly itself a contributing factor.[84]

Most cases brought before the people's courts, David Chidester explains, centre around domestic and neighbourhood affairs. In fact, the existence of these courts should be regarded as a protest against the claim of legitimacy by the "apartheid courts". Arising as "alternative systems in the townships ... in rare cases the courts claimed a popular mandate for carrying out rituals of capital punishment."[85] Necklacing was therefore a syndrome of a much wider cycle of violence, namely, the state's. In that context, as a corollary to hangings, assassinations and 'death squad' activity, necklacing crystallized into a political murder weapon. A theological and moral condemnation of "this awful beastly act", Mashabela argues, can therefore only be complete if it is recognised that "indeed, bestiality begets bestiality".[86] To summarize, segregation and apartheid caused bitterness and untold hardship for the indigenous people.

A new political awareness resulted in the establishment of nonracial African nationalism as the dominant black ideology. Early proponents like A.K. Soga and Joel Goronyane warned that segregation would lead to "serious trouble", so that the intention of nonracialism was to hold race hatred in check.[87] The democratic ideal also played a vital role in keeping the hope for a new dispensation alive in the face of racial conflict. In a real sense then, African nationalism became an obviation of, or substitute for black vindictiveness. Black consciousness, which emerged within a

political lacuna created by the government during the sixties, accentuated psychological emancipation. Its protagonists repeatedly sought to channel the frustration and hate into constructive paths, but were also silenced and persecuted. Peripheral groups such as Poqo and those who held 'people's courts', therefore chose to give vent to their pent-up vengeful emotions as a response to continued state-violence.

In this chapter it was noted that the very first act of Union was to institutionalise the military conquest of the land. The question must be raised as to how the colonial and neo-colonial encroachment on the land should be viewed theologically. The missionaries' Eurocentrism and the pseudo-theological nature of Afrikaner Calvinism, both justifying systemic violence and the expropriation of land, had been unmasked. This makes it imperative that a responsible theology of the land appropriate to the peculiar South African situation be developed.

TOWARDS A BLACK, RESTORATIVE THEOLOGY OF THE LAND

> People's races, and nations which set themselves up to be masters of of the world, by no means become God's image in the process ... or 'God present on earth.' They become at most a monster.
> - Jürgen Moltmann.

Creatorhood and Trusteeship

Indispensable for such a theology, is the motif of creation faith.[ee] Even though Israel's early conception of the universe shows marked points of similarity with other ancient peoples' views, it emphasized especially the dependence of the creation on

the sustaining energy of God. The Hebrew version implied a teleology in the world order - a meaningful historical process directed by the divine Sovereign. "God the creator, the judge, and the redeemer are one and the same God ... Creation and history, therefore, are involved in one another because God is the Lord of both."[89] The assertion that the world depends on the creative will of God, is but one feature of the creation faith. Fundamentally, God's ownership and sovereignty (*despoteia*) is established in the creation narratives (Genesis 1-3), and affirmed throughout the Scriptures. Paul Tillich employs the symbol "God's sustaining creativity" to counter the 'closed' modern world view that denies a continuous, divine preservation of the universe. He therefore advocates an awareness of God's directing activity, traditionally termed "providence", which drives every creature to its fulfilment. Faith in providence, however, should be differentiated from fate, as it "gives meaning to historical existence in spite of never ending experiences of meaninglessness."[90] Belief in historical providence expresses the certainty that no situation whatsoever can frustrate the fulfilment of the creation's ultimate destiny, while giving expression to the need to commit oneself in action to the realization of this destiny.

In his delineation of the creation stories, J. Durand attends to the position of humanity as created being. He rejects an identification of providence with a kind of eternal divine blueprint, determining and manipulating human behaviour and human history. Human beings are in fact drawn into a personal relationship by and with the divine Person, which is an affirmation of their own

freedom. The act of direction does not emanate from an arbitrary will (*fata*), but a *heilswil* (liberating), aimed at the salvation of the creation.[91] H. Berkhof, giving preference to the term "the preservation of creation" over 'providence', adds another dimension to the human disposition besides freedom, namely love. An essential ingredient of God's continuing creation (*creatio continua*), is that humanity is granted a duality of freedom and love. Precisely because of an ongoing divine concern with what happens to and in this world, the human being is appointed as God's partner and steward. 'Love' for Berkhof here implies that the neighbour should be met with one's self-realization of being co-preserver. Humanity is part of the divine creation to be preserved, not exploited or destroyed. The purpose of freedom therefore is to awaken love: "The encounter with the other is a challenge to me to act as the representative of God's love by making his or her needs my concern."[92]

Human responsibility, flowing out of freedom but tempered by love, is the human corollary to divine sovereignty and ownership, which binds us to God in his/her creative purpose. This dialectic of responsibility and freedom is borne out by the psalmists: "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it" (Ps. 24:1), but also: "the earth he has given to humankind" (Ps. 115:16). In New Testament writing, Paul confirms the duality of relationships viz. the ultimate ownership of the creator and the secondary and subordinate human ownership, that is a derivation.[93] Trustee - or stewardship thus becomes a key concept in a theology of the land. Closely related to the notion of trusteeship and its actual content, is the

recurring theme of dominion:

> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."
>
> (Gen. 1:26, NIV)

A parallel is found in Ps. 8:6, "You have given him dominion over the works of your hands." It is striking that the verb *rdh* (to rule) and the noun *mashal* (dominion) are expressly employed with reference to the animal world, not the neighbour. In the thinking and language of the Old Testament, Claus Westermann's exposition shows further that dominion is to be understood in a positive sense. It certainly does not mean the exploitation of animals by humans.[94] 'Dominion' suggests rather that humans relate to the animal and natural world in a creative manner. My contention is that if the roots of these words are non-exploitative, then, theologically speaking, dominion is not a negative notion. It implies a co-operative relationship between humanity and the non-human world, and more especially between humans and humans. This has important implications for a theology of history.

Offering a Christian perspective of history, L. Gilkey suggests that it continually bears the marks of ambiguity, of tragedy and the possibility of nemesis. But it is not a nameless nemesis. Rather, fate arises ultimately from sin and not from the necessities of our existence, so that a creative destiny is always possible. Fate constitutes the demonic times when freedom is violated: as in a structure of slavery, of radical political,

social or economic injustice and exploitation, of racial oppression. Creation faith then means striving towards continual possibility in life. This hope embraces "the experiential meaning of the symbols of the good creation and of providence alike."[95]

Geoffrey Lilburne, developing a New Testament theology of the land, charts the epistemology of the Hebrew word *'eretz*, which can be legitimately translated with both "earth" and "land". Whereas "earth" points to the physical basis and environment for life, "land" denotes territory that is possessed and struggled over. In biblical history it relates to the concrete redemptive activity of God on Israel's behalf. Lilburne then detects an essential continuity between the divine activity in the election of Israel and the Incarnation (John 1, Phillipians 2). The history of concrete salvation reaches a climax in the Christ-event. While the Gentile Christians shared a more universal vision (Mt. 24:14, Mk. 13:10, Lk. 24:47; cf. Mt. 28:19), the Jewish Christians expected that Israel would be restored to the land. Despite these different nuances in the messianic expectations, the Messiah was never an abstraction and the concrete emphasis of the Hebrew Scriptures on "land" was neither diluted nor spiritualized. The early Christian movement believed that the divine vindicating intervention occurred in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, necessitating an incarnational view of "land". All the blessings associated with the promised land - security, peace, and abundance in the presence of God - find their fulfilment in the presence of Christ in whom God's kingdom has become a reality. The exclusive restoration of the land to Israel played a minor part as Jesus sought a universal com-

munity which would be loving, serving, and inclusive. The knowledge that God's reign is ultimately inclusive of all localities "gives us a healthy reminder that our local life style must mesh with the needs of other localities."[96] To be called to follow Christ is to share in this restoring dimension of God's creative and redemptive work in Christ.

The economic implications of creation faith are traced by Christopher Wright. Old Testament ethics, he says, indicates that access to and use of the earth and its natural resources, is a divine right to be shared by all human beings. It is a perspective that puts privatized, individual ownership in a critical light. Corresponding to the subordinate nature of the human disposition, such individual property rights, even when legitimate, "always remain subordinate to the prior right of all men (sic) to have access to and the use of the resources of the earth."[97] Ownership does not entail absolute right of disposal, but rather responsibility for administration and distribution. Humanity should be seen as a family that possesses a 'common ownership' of the world's resources.[98]

In the New Testament the socio-economic significance of the land is not lost, for the oneness of believers in Christ and their shared experience through the Holy Spirit has far-reaching practical implications. It is shown by Charles Avila that Patristic thought (in particular Clement of Alexandria, Basil the Great, Ambrose, John Chrysostom and Augustine) too found it revulsive that God's creation had been subjected to the ideology of an absolute human

right of ownership. In lieu of being an instrument of exclusion and separation, ownership should be one of inclusion and community building. According to Avila the Patristic outlook on ownership comprises two basic qualities: Firstly, possession is there for the sake of self-efficiency (*autarkeia*). Self-reliance enables one to become morally independent, so as to be free for service to others. Secondly, the purpose of property, and of wealth, is not only to achieve individual *autarkeia*, but also to attain *koinonia* (equal fellowship). Nothing could be more unjust, divisive, and thus destructive of koinonia, than the accumulation of wealth at the expense of others being poor.[99]

Finally, in the light of the innate significance of creation being ultimately owned and directed by God, land itself can only be regarded as a gift. John Hart suggests that when land is seen as mere matter and not a gift, the primary attitude toward it is exploitative, i.e. to serve the needs and wants of the exploiters, whether as an individual, a corporate entity, or a nation. A denial of the entrustment of the land to the whole of humanity is essentially antisocial. However, when land is received as a gift, it would be conserved, developed or ordered "to serve the needs both of the one who has control over it and of others of his or her generation."[100] Hart provides three "principles of land relations" that embody the concept of land as trust and are compatible with the Christians tradition:

1. The land is God's.
2. The land is entrusted to humanity.
3. The land is to be share equitably through the ages. [101]

Pondering at length over the symbol of the land as gift, Walter

Brueggemann discovers that the history of Israel crystallizes into a threefold pattern: (a) land, (b) exile, and (c) kingdom. Israel acknowledged that it did not take the land by power or by strategem, but because "Yahweh has spoken a word and had acted" accordingly.[102] In other words, life and land is given as gift to Israel by Yahweh, to be covenantly received and used. Only within the covenantal realm is the temptation of coveting combatted. Those who have no standing in the community - the landless, the dispossessed - must be cared for: the poor (Ex. 23:6; Deut. 15:7-11), the stranger (Ex. 21:21-24; 23:9), the widow and orphan (Deut. 24:19-22), and the Levite (Deut. 14:27). Brueggemann notes that in both Testaments land possessed or land promised is a communal concern, a gift that cannot be grasped or seized. It is in this sense that he contrasts gift with grasp:

> This is not simply humanitarianism but it is Israel's insight into the riddle of the land and how it is kept and how it is lost. Land is not, if viewed as gift, for self-security, but for the brother and sister. Land is not given to the calculating, but to the "meek", this is to say the ones who do not presume. [103]

A Contextual Evaluation

A theology of the land can never by understood outside of a specific context. What meaning then do the symbols of creation faith, human trusteeship vis-à-vis divine ownership, historical providence or preservation, dominion and gift, acquire within our context? Of considerable import is the fact that at the interface of biblical faith and the traditional African point of view, one finds the most profound statement about God and land, namely the agreement that He/She is the ultimate owner of the universe. John Mbiti, articulating the religious views of many African peoples, states that

throughout Africa creation is widely acknowledged as the work of God. Additionally God (Maker and Moulder) provides life, rain, fertility, health and other necessities needed for sustaining creation. In the Zulu religious tradition e.g. it is believed that God's providence or sustenance functions in such a way that without the creator, humanity would vanish. Humans are mystically bound to the land, which is sacred. What matters most to the people is what is geographically near. The land provides them with the roots of existence, but also binds them to the ancestors so that a separation from these ties, it is feared, will bring disaster to family and community life. "To remove Africans by force from their land is an act of such great injustice that no foreigner can fathom it."[104]

At a deeply religious level the process of colonization meant a total disregard for these similarities related to biblical creation faith and historical providence. Instead, a colonial view of God was developed, entrenching an exploitative morality toward the indigenous people. A contextual theology of the land would, above all, have to reinforce the *telos* of creativity i.e. God's providential commitment to liberate humankind and rediscover humanness (*ubuntu*). It is argued in this chapter that the Wars of Resistance and other acts of defiance by oppressed people throughout the colonisation and apartheid era, constitute contextual expressions of the oppressed, instinctively realising their true calling by sharing in God's creative work. By rebelling against exploitation and the selfish expropriation of land by land-owners, who use land for their own selfish ends, indigenous people are furthering God's

purpose which is to restore the land - the divine gift. The theological task is to interpret this action accordingly.

If there is any paradigm at all for Christianity to be drawn from the Hebrew pattern of land, exile, and kingdom, it is the conviction that the name of Yahweh and salvation are inseparable within the historical realm. Liberation is not merely a theme among others in biblical tradition, but the central theme, without which God cannot be understood correctly. Israel's ancient deliverance from bondage bears witness to the historicity of God's emancipatory actions. Liberation is "the heart of the gospel ... by which everything stands or falls."[105] The grasping nature of slavery, colonization, and apartheid amounts to a heretical denial of the inseparable connection between the nature of Yahweh and human freedom. This is why the Kairos-theologians find the linking of God to the colonial history of dispossession, specifically in the preamble to the South African constitution, blasphemous:

> In humble submission to Almighty God, who controls the destiny of nations and the history of peoples, who gathered our forebears together from many lands and gave them this their own land ... who has wondrously delivered them from the dangers that beset them. [106]

A related issue concerns the status of those who are landless. Prophets such as Amos, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Micah, states J.L. Koole, defended the rights of the destitute and the downtrodden. Expropriation of the property of others, is not only an assault on the neighbour's possession, but also an assault on her or his person. What is needed in an exploitative situation is not charity, but justice.[107]

> Woe to those
> who devise wickedness,
> and to those who plot evil in their beds.
> When the morning dawns they perform it.
> Shame on you! you who add house to house
> and join field to field,
> until not an acre remains,
> and you are left to dwell alone in the land.
> The Lord of Hosts has sworn in my hearing:
> Many houses shall go to ruin,
> fine mansions shall be uninhabited.
> (Is. 5:8f.)

F. von Meyenfeldt sees in texts like Job 24:1-4 and Proverbs 23:10-11 a reflection of authorities who alienate people from their land. These acts constitute "wreed onmaatschappelijk gedrag" (cruel anti-social behaviour) that must be remedied by the provision of "grond-rechten" (landrights) to the landless.[108] Von Meyenfeldt then poses the question whether, within an inhuman ideological framework as 'the survival of the fittest', there could be place for God's children on God's earth. The Afrikaner theologian, Johan Heyns, also lays stress on the absolute ownership of God, so that in his ethical construction theft commences in the first instance when God is not recognised as the creator-owner of the earth. The transgression is committed both against the creator and the neighbour ("Diefstal is elke handeling en daad waarin die naaste benadeel word").[109] His failure to deal with the subject of the colonial expropriation of land, in the light of this understanding is, of course, most disconcerting. Even in a recent article titled "The Religious-Ethical Foundation for a New South Africa", the issue is again not addressed in terms of his own theological criteria.[110] The confiscation of land belonging to people by another people, particularly within the colonial system, has to be identified as "theft from above."[111] In declining to face this issue Heyns is at

best refusing to take the contemporary theological task seriously. At worst his theology borders on historical dishonesty. The inevitable violence inherent in such an ideology, is depicted poetically by Glen Sonwabo Thomas:

> "Give back my land" I cried
> The answer - cannonballs and bullets.
> Then I compromised: "Let's share the land."
> The answer - pass laws and removals. [112]

Biblical creation faith and the contextual perspective both accentuate that 'land' is a communal concern. In African tradition the self exists in organic and collective terms. The Sotho proverb 'Motho ke motho ka batho' (A human being is a human being with, by, and for human beings) and the Zulu saying 'okwakho okwami' (what belongs to one belongs to all), convey the rich meaning of relationism.[113] These age-old notions of corporateness correspond to the Scriptural symbol of the land as being an inclusive gift, a trust to be shared equitably. However, this traditional inclusivity seems to be paradoxical with the notion that Africa as a land is indeed a divine gift to the aboriginal African people. Against the reality of colonial dispossession land is, in the words of Takatso Mofokeng, an inalienable commodity because it is the basis of African self-respect and creativity. Loss of land means the loss of creativity and imagination and consequently the poverty of black people.[114]

We finally need to evaluate the Hebrew idea of *eretz* - as earth - in the context of the oppressed. Primarily, as is made clear by Mercy Amba Oduyoye, the confession that the earth belongs to God who created it, implies an ecological compassion instead of disin-

tegration, disharmony and disruption.[115] Apart from this connotation, both the biblical and African traditions bring the earth (*eretz*) and its people (*'am ha-aretz*: the people of the land) into a proper relation. An accumulation of economic power and wealth in the hands of a few at the cost of the poor, undermines the close linkage between the earth and all God's people. For Africans land constitutes the most important form of wealth. Landlessness has therefore a direct bearing on their prevalent destitution.

Conclusion

Black people's sense of place, of landownership, had been eroded systematically by disruption and dislocation - a process of human estrangement to which the Christian Church undoubtedly contributed. Sudden detachment from the land, such as the forced removal of millions of "surplus-people", amounts to their dehumanization, and the only option within the parameters of an ethic of vengeance, is the restoration of the land to the dispossessed. Weighed against the principles of land relations, slavery and colonialism - sin historically concretised - are the opposite of salvation history, an abuse of freedom which constricted the freedom of the other, the neighbour. The religio-political equation of the Afrikaners during their "Great Trek" with Israel, regarding themselves as being the divinely chosen people (*volk*), was no mere moral mistake, but a fundamental contradiction of God's creative and preservative purposes. Thus the positive intention of the commission "to rule" (*rdh*) and "to have dominian over" (*mashal*), had been distorted into oppressive dominion. It is therefore imperative that in structuring an ethic of vengeance, that specific attention be given to the

theme of the rightful restoration of the land to its people. However, even though this moral obligation is indispensable for the rediscovery of the indigenous people's sense of dignity and possession, it cannot bypass either the Scriptural koinonic content or the African ethos of inclusiveness. Naturally, this ethical paradox challenges any narrow, black nationalistic ideal, a tension that needs to be further analysed in the final chapter.

The next part shows how oppressed people, at different times and in divergent situations, have tried to cope with anger at structural injustice, namely, the first-century Jewish Zealots, the German Reformer Thomas Müntzer, and Malcolm X during the 1950s in the United States of America. This broader perspective is necessary, as the development of an ecumenical approach to the moral issue of vengeance is crucial for nation-building in a post-apartheid era.

What is evident thus far, is that indiscriminate acts of violence against whites and the 'local surrogates for white minority rule', had been a consequence of the indigenous people's wrath at historical wrongs. Prof. Z.K. Matthews explains this linkage in his autobiography:

> I wonder if white people ever think of what goes on in the hearts and minds of persons against whom these stupid discriminations are practised. People of colour have been exposed to this kind of thing so much they often appear to have learned to live with it. They smile and laugh about it, they show no resentment because nobody would take any notice if they did, but deep down in their hearts there is a bitterness and a sense of frustration which will take centuries to remove ... The white man (sic) is creating an unfathomable well of hatred against himself. One sees that hatred expressed whenever acts of violence are perpetrated against white people or against Africans who are believed to be stooges of the white man. The way their bodies are mutilated is an expression not so much of the savagery of the African, as is erroneously supposed, as of the bitterness which Africans often had to repress. [116]

Part Two

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WRATHFUL CHILDREN

Preface to Part Two

In this section of the thesis three case studies, all with significant theological content, are undertaken. Each of these bring issues of wrath and vengeance sharply into focus: the Zealots of first-century Palestine, the late-medieval reformer Thomas Müntzer, and the African-American activist Malcolm X during the 1950s. This choice is deliberate. These revolutionaries, each being provocative examples in the history of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, based their "vindictive" political involvement on theological-ethical presuppositions. Christian theology in South Africa, and this particular study on God's wrathful children that is contextually located in a multi-religious community in which these three great world religions are substantially represented, is obliged to wrestle with the issues of political rage and revenge on an ecumenical and inter-faith level. The arguments and insights emerging from these case studies may assist us to gain clarity on our own, contextual formulations.

CHAPTER THREE

RE-EXAMINING THE ZEALOTS

> On the trumpets for marshalling the battle they shall write: 'The marshalled squadrons of God are able to wreak His angry vengeance upon all Sons of Darkness. On the trumpets of assembly for the infantry, when the gates of war are opened for them to go out to the enemy line, they shall write: 'A reminder of the vengeance to be exacted in the Era of God.' On the trumpets of pursuit they shall write: 'God has smitten all the children of Darkness. He will not turn back His anger until He has consumed them.'
>
> - Qumran, War Scroll

> "Christ, what more do You need to convince You
> That You've made it and You're easily as strong
> As the filth from Rome who rape our country -
> And who've terrorized our people for so long?"
>
> - Simon in the rock opera "Jesus Christ Superstar"

Hypotheses

Divine wrath and human vengeance as its ethical corollary, must be weighed against the historical realities of actual exploitation, dispossession, and resistance. Methodologically this implies an encounter between a theology-from-below and an evaluation of the modes of vengeance to be found within oppressed communities. The relevance of the Jewish Zealots for the black South African masses is fourfold.

1. This resistance movement was not elitist in nature, but emerged from the matrix of the socio-economically *déclassé* (the *'am ha-aretz*) both in terms of the leadership and their following. They were the people who, along with the slaves, mostly became the victims of the oppressive religious rule and

alien Roman imperialism.

2. The Zealotic option was based on the same theological rationale shared by other contemporary revolutionists of the late Second Temple era. However, the Zealots' *actions* indicate a peculiar ethic from which theological-ethical criteria can be gleaned.

3. The Zealots' retributive acts were grounded in their understanding of the wholism of ancient Judaic ethics - a *Weltanschauung* that unified the religious and socio-political dimensions of life. Consequently they saw no contradiction between their religious beliefs and their political actions. Our insistence in Part One on the rediscovery of the authentic African value of *ubuntu* (human incorporatedness), finds a crucial point of contact here.

4. The "janus face" of human vengeance, that is, both its constructive and destructive manifestations, is illustrated in the history of the ancient Zealot party. Black South Africans need to discern critically the positive motives woven into the Zealotic ethic of vengeance. It is argued in this chapter that the Zealots were actuated by the desire to avenge themselves on certain, as they saw it, unrighteously rich fellow-Jews who, along with the Romans, were co-responsible for their destitution.

In order to establish a sound and responsible ethic regarding the

Jewish resisters known as 'the Zealots', their historical position needs to be clarified. Notwithstanding a variety of innate nuances, basically two theses emerged from the long-standing modern debate about these partisans of the late Second Temple period. The first scholarly interpretation lumps all the revolutionary factions which operated in the time 6-73 C.E. together under a single 'umbrella' term: corporately they constitute the Zealots. The second view highlights the distinctions between the factions whilst recognizing that all of them harboured nationalist ideals. In the latter construction the Zealots are then regarded as but one of several different militant groups that participated in the Great Jewish Revolt of 66-73 C.E.

The Currency of the Term 'Zealot'

The real historic occurrence of the term 'Zealot' is traced by Marcus Borg as follows: It appears in Josephus (our major source), the rabbinic literature, the insufficient evidence of the writings of the Church fathers, and the New Testament. A reading of the *Aboth* of Rabbi Nathan will confirm that the Zealots were only active during the fatal war of 66-73 C.E. The second rabbinical reference (in M Sanh. ix.6) simply points to 'zealous ones', that is, private persons who spontaneously enforced the law in the Hasmonean period (the previous century). In the early Christian writings of Justin Martyr and Hegesippus, lists of the different Jewish sects are provided, but the Zealots are absent from both lists. The quite incoherent account of Hippolytus, does not at all provide a warrant for affirming 'Zealots' to be the proper name of any movement in the time of Jesus. The last evidence is found in

the New Testament. Twice the evangelist Luke calls the disciple Simon, 'the Zealot' (Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13). The parallel passages in Matthew 10:4 and Mark 3:18 have 'Simon the Cananaean'. 'Cananaean' is derived from the semitic *qanna* (meaning zeal, eagerness, enthusiasm, jealousy) and is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek 'zealot'. Therefore, argues Borg, this nickname "need mean no more than that Simon was a 'zealous one' or that he was a Jew known to have taken the law into his own hands in punishing Jews who violated the Torah."[1] It is scarcely proof that an organized revolutionary movement existed during the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth.

While S.G.F. Brandon regards these biblical references as definite proof that 'Zealot' had been an accepted currency in Jesus' time and the inclusion of a Zealot among the disciples as being factual, Alan Richardson argues that the word does not necessarily or even normally mean a member of the political revolutionary party of the Zealots. An examination of related words in the New Testament indicates their general sense as having to do with religious zeal or religious sectarian rivalry (for example, Acts 5:17, 7:9, 13:45, Rom 10:2, 1 Cor 3:3, Gal 1:14, 4:17-18); the words are used in a positive or pejorative sense, according to what one is zealous for or zealous about, but they do not refer to the Zealot faction *per se*.[2]

To be sure, the apostle Paul identifies himself as a zealot (*zēlōtēs*) in Acts 22:3, but "... it is highly unlikely that Luke thought Paul to be a member of a militant anti-Roman resistance

party!"[3] Indeed, some Pharisees belonged to the strictest sect of enthusiasts for the Law (*chaburah*) and before his conversion Paul was one of them (Acts 26:5, Gal 1:14, Phil 3:5f). In these texts the apostle ascribes his old, pharisaic persecution of Christians to his extreme zeal (*zēlōtēs hupárchōn*), "for God" and "the traditions of my fathers" (Acts 22:3, Gal 1:14). Here "zeal" is clearly located in the sphere of religious intolerance and fanaticism. "It is incredible that he would have used the noun 'zealot' of himself, if it were widely understood to imply membership of a nationalist party of Zealots."[4] Thus, the only 'primary' source left to which we can turn for information is the work of Flavius Josephus. Within ten years after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., Josephus wrote a history of the Jewish struggle for national independence. However, interpreting Josephus' writing from a black theological perspective is problematic, as he is biased against and even hostile to the poor, while his basic sympathies for the upper levels of Judean society are evident. His pejorative use of the terms *lēstai* or *lēstrikoi* (brigands or robbers) is fortified by the employment of other depreciatory expressions such as "villains", "deceivers", "scum", and "the country was infested with bands of imposters."[5] Thus, whilst the term 'Zealot' should be traced in Josephus, his pro-Roman, anti-revolutionary stance places restrictions on the development of a theological ethic-from-below. With this limitation in mind, the two basic theses regarding the historic position of the Zealots are now examined.

Before doing so, a brief comment on process is in order. The focus

of what follows is on the debate concerning the use of the term 'Zealot' as a basis for identifying the historical emergence of the Zealot movement (proper). Recognizing the significance of context for theological insights, this approach is important for the discerning of an ethic of vengeance in the Zealot movement. Certain ingredients of this theology are tentatively identified as a basis for further developments in the final chapter, where their and other theological-ethical principles are drawn on to develop an appropriate theology of wrath for black South Africans committed to correcting historical wrongs in the creation of a just, democratic future.

The Unity Model

Scholars who defend this view relate the beginning of the militant Zealots to the Roman annexation of Judea as a province in 6 C.E. In that year, according to Josephus, Augustus removed and banished the Jewish ruler Archelaus from his office as ethnarch. In order to calculate the assessment of personal taxes (*tributum capitis*) and an additional land-tax (*tributum soli*), he ordered the registration of the entire population.[6] The legate of Syria, Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, conducted a census to determine how much tax could be extracted from the new Roman province of Judea. Opposition within Pharisaic circles to this oppressive rule led to the establishment of a fourth philosophical sect, along with the existing Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes. The historian, Josephus, further submits that the members of this sect refused to acknowledge the emperor as lord (*kyrios*): "... they have a passion for liberty that is almost unconquerable, since they are convinced that God alone is their

leader and master."[7]

Martin Hengel suggests that the leaders of these Pharisaic dissenters, Judas the Galilean and Saddok the Pharisee, forged a highly effective ideology of eschatological struggle for liberation. Expectation of God's kingship made it appear blasphemous to refer to the emperor as "king" and "lord". Their radicalism was based on an accentuation of the first commandment: "You shall have no other gods besides me" ("... eine Verschärfung des ersten Gebots"). The self-deification of the caesar was unacceptable in light of the Jewish confession of God's exclusive lordship. ("Von hierher gesehen erscheint es als naheliegend, dass die revolutionäre Forderung des Judas, Gott allein als Herrn anzuerkennen, aus dem Herzen des jüdischen Glaubens erwachsen ist.")[8] Recapitulating the movement's revolutionary theocentrism, Hengel holds that its "basic axioms were ardent expectation of God's reign and fanatical zeal for the law."[9] This interpretation brings the theological motivation of the Jewish resisters into prominence. Hengel adds that although the movement was primarily motivated by religious concerns, theology and politics were intimately related. The Jewish reaction to Roman imperialism had "very concrete political consequences, which were expressed both in the apocalyptic ideology of the messianic holy war and in a long series of bloody rebellions."[10]

S.G.F. Brandon also adheres to the unity model: the Zealots, founded by Judas and Saddok, were a long-standing revolutionary organization that sustained the violent resistance until they provoked the Revolt of 66-73 C.E.[11] Against that backdrop the

ethical position of Jesus of Nazareth concerning political violence is then evaluated. The powerful effect that the Zealots had on Jewish life during this period, Brandon argues, makes it unthinkable that it did not become an environmental factor of the life of the wandering Galilean healer. Despite their denigration by Josephus, and the almost complete silence of the original Christian sources about Zealotism, they were patriots who saw the census and tribute as indications that Judea, Yahweh's holy land, had regressed into a possession of heathen oppressors. "In other words, the Zealot ideal of Yahweh's sovereignty inevitably involved resistance, as a religious duty ..."[12] Once Brandon has established this positive finding, he proceeds to investigate the possibility of an alliance between Jesus and the Zealots. For him there can be no doubt that the former chose a Zealot to be one of his inner band of disciples. The significance of the fact is reinforced by the Gospel's recording of Christ's condemnatory attitude to other Jewish parties. The absence of a similar denunciation of the militant nationalists "must thus surely be indicative of a relationship between Jesus and these patriots which the Evangelists preferred not to disclose."[13]

Brandon concedes that Jesus himself was probably not a Zealot, but he maintains that the profession of Zealotism was nevertheless compatible with participation in the apostolic mission.[14] A number of sayings and deeds recorded by the synoptic evangelists corroborate this. Firstly, the saying on bearing the cross (Matt. 10:38, Mark 8:34) originated with the Zealots who expected and suffered this Roman punishment. Secondly, a correct interpretation of the

tribute issue recorded by Mark (12:13-17) shows similarity of outlook with Zealotist teaching. Thirdly, the 'cleansing of the temple' (Mark 11:15-19) constituted in effect a violent attack on the sacerdotal aristocracy.[15] Paul Winter also suggests that the New Testament contains evidence of the existence of seditious tendencies among the disciples. He infers that "Jesus enjoyed friendly personal relations with people adhering to anti-Roman factions."[16]

It is historically indisputable, Brandon continues, that Jesus of Nazareth was crucified by the Romans as a rebel against their government in Judea - crucifixion being the normal sentence for political insurrection. In proximity to the Zealot party, the emerging Jewish Christianity (with its headquarters in Jerusalem) insisted on the absolute sovereignty of God and the imminent, earthly restoration of the kingdom to Israel. The difference between this "para-Zealot movement" and the Zealot party was that the former believed that the restoration of the kingdom to Israel would be effected by the return of Jesus as the military Messiah - an achievement which would necessarily involve the overthrow of the imperial regime.[17] This being their expectation, the Jerusalem-based Christian Church did not passively wait for the *parousia* simply to happen, but supported the Zealotist struggle to defend their holy city and perished with it in 70 C.E.[18] The author of Mark, however, seemed to be embarrassed by the implication of crucifixion, namely as a Roman form of punishment. Writing in the immediate post-war era to Christians in Rome, he reconstructed a portrayal of Jesus rendering him innocent of sedition. The Markan

conception was later elaborated by the other evangelists into that of the pacific Christ.[19]

Also employing "Zealots" as a blanket term indicating all the revolutionary, anti-Roman factions, Oscar Cullmann concentrates on their ideal of the holy war. They aspired to destroy the temple cult and the existing priesthood by the use of force, and to replace it within the national-earthly framework. Although Jesus of Nazareth shared the concern of the Zealots and condemned the social-economic injustice of his time, he was not interested in the violent destruction of worldly institutions. Dismissing Brandon's claim that the 'cleansing of the temple' involved the participation of many militaristic nationalists, he describes it as an individual act, a prophetic sign, and not an element of a Zealotic programme. "He demanded a radical individual change of heart, which already in the present age changes one's relationship to God and to one's neighbour."[20] Jesus, therefore, was never a Zealot revolutionary nor did he work together with them.[21] Granted, he "suffered the Roman death penalty, crucifixion, and the inscription, the *titulus*, above the cross named as his crime the Zealotist attempt of having strived for kingly rule in Israel ..." ("er ist als Zeloten-führer von den Römern hingerichtet worden"). But this condemnation, Cullmann holds, was the consequence of a judicial error, for the essence of his ministry was neither understood by the Gentiles nor his fellow-Jews. The Roman accusation (*titulus*) had been based on the popular Jewish expectation of a political Messiah, which was a distortion of Jesus' own conception of his eschatological messianism.[22]

In the preceding construct the Zealotic option for revolutionary violence becomes the touchstone against which Jesus' ethical stance is weighed. In other words, as a Zealotist sympathizer he supposedly accepted political violence as a viable option or, as a pacifist preacher, he rejected their actions. Such an approach is made dependent on Jesus of Nazareth being a contemporary of the Zealot party. The question is whether indeed the principal source provides any evidence for the currency of 'Zealot' as a party designation prior to the massive revolt of 66-73 C.E. What is significant is that it does not appear at all in the *Antiquities*, whose narrative ends in 66 C.E. Another factor emerges from Josephus' war narrative: the term is used only throughout the account of the revolt and, more precisely, first employed to designate a particular group which operated in 67 C.E.[23] We conclude that the modern, scholarly juxtaposition of Pharisees-Sadducees-Essenes-Jesus of Nazareth-Zealots must therefore be rejected as being unhistorical and anachronistic.[24]

The Differentiation Model

As early as 1920 Kirsopp Lake asserted that, as a sect or party, the Zealots could not have existed before the war.[25] The fictional notion that Jesus grew up with a close acquaintance of the Zealots and their aims and activities, supporting or rejecting them, thoroughly bedevils any serious assessment of the Zealotic ethic itself. For Brandon the Gospels' silence about them is strange and curious, but R. Price shows that "an argument from silence ... cannot carry much weight."[26] In the words of Marcus Borg: "It is perilous to attach significance to Jesus' silence about the Zea-

lots; such silence is hardly surprising, since the term was not yet in use."[27] S.C. Mott's tongue-in-the-cheek phrase identifies the irony of the enduring debate: "Jesus and the absent Zealots."[28] The unity model is actually a retrojection of politico-religious developments that occurred much later.

My basic premise is that the Zealotic alternative must be evaluated in terms of its own history, cultural milieu, and ethical *Selbst-verständnis* (self-understanding) without confusing the issue with references to Jesus of Nazareth. To be sure, the social-economic scene in first-century Palestine was singularly desperate, and led to unrest and widespread popular discontent among Palestinian Jews. But the evidence submitted to prove that in the lifetime of Jesus organized, violent insurgency occurred or that an armed struggle was waged by "the Zealots", is not convincing at all. The fact that our primary source records no violent disturbances for the period 6-23 C.E., ironically only proves, in Brandon's view, that it contains "many *lacunae*."[29] An analysis of the two incidents that did happen during the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate (26-36 C.E.), as related by Josephus, shows self-control on the part of the Jews. They protested "in multitudes" against Pilate's introduction of military ensigns in Jerusalem, bearing the emperor's effigy. The demonstrating crowd begged Pilate to remove the ensigns. Instead of being sensitive to their pleas, the praefectus ordered his soldiers to punish the protesters with immediate death. "But they, casting themselves prostrate and baring their throats, declared that they had gladly welcomed death rather than make bold to transgress the wise provisions of the laws."[30]

The second clash was caused by Pilate's arbitrary decision to build an aqueduct which would bring water into Jerusalem. Whereupon "many ten thousands of people" got together, because the procurator made use of "sacred money" to finance the project. Brandon, in an effort to show that Jesus would have sympathized with the seditious crowd, describes the Jewish reaction as "very violent". Josephus' account tells a different story: "Some too even hurled insults and abuse of the sort that a throng will commonly engaged in." In fact, Pilate's brutal attack had been on an unarmed crowd.[31] It is known with certainty, André Trocmé notes, that for fifteen years, "from the beginning of Pilate's rule until the end of the proconsulary regime in Judea AD 26-41, the Jews seem to have temporarily given up combatting violence with violence."[32] During Jesus' time the protests launched against imperial rule were nonviolent in nature.

In an undated publication called *The Constructive Revolution of Jesus* its author, Samuel Dickey, concedes that "it is altogether possible that we should abandon the name 'Zealot' as a general designation."[33] Josephus' war narrative contains a summary of the revolutionary groups that were operative in the revolt of 66-73 C.E. A careful reading demonstrates that he differentiates between distinct groups, namely, the Sicarii, bands led by John of Gischala and Simon bar Giora, the Idumaeans and lastly, the Zealots.[34] This is why the remark by M.J. Townsend that "indeed, 'Zealot' must be regarded as something of an umbrella term covering a number of national interests", is not helpful.[35] We should recognize the peculiarities of the different groups instead of lumping them

together as some modern scholars tend to do. Cecil Roth, for example, concludes that the Sicarii and followers of the Fourth Philosophy were virtually identical. He also has "decisive proof of the virtual identity of the Zealots and the Sicarii."[36] The major focus of this chapter remains on the Zealots proper, but the Sicarii are also examined because of the obstinacy of scholarly muddling. On this point Günther Baumbach's explication is unambiguous: the differences and individual concerns of the anti-Roman parties annul the 'umbrella' view or unity-argument ("...sprechen gegen eine ursprüngliche Einheitlichkeit der jüdischen Aufstandsbewegung"). One is compelled to speak of separate "revolutionären Kampfgruppen" (revolutionary forces).[37] In summation: The first modern scholarly construct of the Zealot story is based on the assumption that all the Jewish nationalist factions involved in the resistance against Rome during 6-73 C.E., formed a unity. Martin Hengel, adhering to this view, emphasizes the importance of acknowledging their religious motivation. The probability that Jesus of Nazareth supported the Zealotic movement, and hence societal change by violent means, is defended by S.G.F. Brandon. Oscar Cullmann also accepts that the Galilean healer was well aware of the revolutionary ideals of the Zealots. Not only did Jesus resist the temptation to become a member of the movement, but he rather introduced an ethic of transformation built on individual conversions. In contrast to this model, other scholars highlight the differences between the anti-Roman factions. Here the Zealot party is perceived to emerge only during the revolt of 66-73 C.E. Our critical reading of the Josephan account of the war confirms the latter view.

In order to unravel the motives, reasons and desires that underpinned the Zealotic 'ethic of vengeance', it is imperative that a closer look be taken at the antecedents (*causae*) of the Great Jewish Revolt. To do so the structures of control and the growing peasant unrest and rebellion need to be considered.

FACTORS WHICH PROVOKED THE GREAT JEWISH REVOLT

> The problem in Judaea was that the Jews' religion and politics were inextricably bound up together as two facets of a single way of life, and though a *modus vivendi* might have been established between Rome and moderate Jewish opinion, the existence of a belligerent nationalist party focusing discontent and fostering opposition posed a problem which the Romans finally failed to solve.
>
> - E. Mary Smallwood

The Herodian Burden

"The Hasmonean ideal of total independence had irrevocably passed away with the arrival of Roman imperialism in Syria and Palestine." This painful reality, expressed by A. Schalit, was punctuated by the Roman Senate's appointment of Herod as king of Judea (37-4 B.C.E.), whose immediate task was to quell the protest actions launched by adherents of the fallen Hasmonean dynasty. Herod consequently detained several opponents of the Roman government and sentenced them to death without trial. Josephus mentions that the client king proceeded to make "slaves of some 30 000 men."[38] Herod's ruthlessness actually concealed his fear that his subjects would instigate an open revolt. "Such an eventuality would undermine his main recommendation in the eyes of the Romans - his ability to maintain law and order within his kingdom."[39] The client king additionally embarked on an active policy of

Hellenization, obliterating the vestiges of the former Hasmonean rule. His brutality was reflected in the destruction of several towns, and the crucifixion of a large number of Palestinian people. It was during this reign that the enslaved peasantry began to find the accumulative tax system an insuperable burden. Herod's merciless despotism finds expression in Richard Horsley and John Hanson's depiction: "His name stands in Jewish and Christian traditions as a symbol of oppressive tyranny."[40]

The Jewish Temple had been magnificently rebuilt by Herod the Great. Yet, he never succeeded in reaching the mass of the people, who continued to regard him as a despot forced upon them by a heathen power. M. Stern points out that the grandiose building projects did not suffice to alleviate the basic disagreement between him and the Jewish people. "The fact that Herod identified himself completely with the aims and ideology of Augustus' principate was one stumbling block in his relations with the Jews."[41] He even promoted the worship of 'the divine Caesar Augustus'. An insensitivity toward the Jewish faith and tradition was demonstrated by the affixing of a golden eagle over the Temple, which brought matters to a head. Right at the end of his reign in 4 B.C.E., two rabbis named Judas ben Sariphaeus and Matthias ben Margalothus, instigated young people who removed the eagle and smashed it publicly. The carefully planned action was both politically and theologically inspired. It was, concludes Josephus, symbolic of a general protest against alien rule, as well as a fitting moment to avenge God's honour. "And with pleasure we will endure death of whatever punishment you may inflict on us not because of any wrongdoing on

our part, but because of our devotion to piety."[42] Dominion over the Jewish people was finally only possible via increased military repression.

Naturally, the elaborate construction projects during Herod's thirty-three years of reign meant the creation of employment for thousands. Ironically though, as Salo Baron's investigation into the social-economic issue shows, it was exactly the oppressive burden of double taxation "which made possible all this splendour, and it brought the Palestinian people to the brink of ruin." As a result, appalling poverty prevailed among the masses. Moreover, the tax collectors extorted a substantial amount from the population which never reached the royal treasury.[43] Joachim Jeremias reflects on the reaction of the poor to these measures: "Bitter was the popular outcry against the abuse of the whole commonwealth because of despotism, against the squandering of money that had been wrung from the people's very life blood."[44]

The accumulated burden of taxation (which probably amounted to well over 40 percent of the peasantry's production), corruption, excessive expenditure, and repression remained constant until the outbreak of the revolt in 66 C.E.[45] Delineating the economic discrepancies between the wealthy and the poor in first-century Judea, J. Klausner concludes that "the hand of Government grew ever more oppressive as one unsympathetic procurator followed another."[46] It is evident that economic exploitation by a corrupt government became a major factor that provoked the bloody confrontation between the ruling class and the Jewish people. However, a more precise

question that needs to be raised, concerns the possibility that the peasantry experienced the Herodian brutality differently than the urban populations. An analysis by Seán Freyne sheds light on this particular issue.

The variables that shaped the economic system in Galilean society, are profiled by Freyne. Utilizing literary and archaeological sources he portrays first-century Galilee as being essentially rural, "whose inhabitants are committed to the peasant way of life and live in villages, though surrounded by a circle of Greek-style cities on the periphery."[47] Freyne stresses that urban/rural tensions were prevalent in this region. The Jewish peasantry felt alienated from the cities, which they regarded as the domains of those who controlled their lives at the economic and social levels. On the other hand, economic forces linked the urban and rural areas in a mutually convenient, albeit ambivalent, relationship of interdependence. The religious capital, Jerusalem, was highly important to the peasants and fidelity to the pilgrimage obligations was but one indication of their attachment to the centre. Galilean peasants thus shared a religious worldview with absentee Jerusalem-based landlords, rendering the inherent exploitation of the system more latent than overt. This, however, does not mean that the experience of oppression and burden of taxation were minimized. "In a word, life in a Galilean village was never easy and sometimes brutal, constantly under pressure from above, usually from the city or city-based people that threatened to deprive the less fortunate of the necessities of life, thus reducing them to penury."[48] It is in view of the peasants' constant experience of being alienated

from their urban landlords and the ensuing burden of poverty, that their later desire to avenge themselves on the rich should be understood. A crucial matter to discern though, is the response of the Jewish authorities (who were supposed to protect the poor) to imperial rule.

High Priestly Privileges

Two traditional Jewish institutions Herod inherited from the fallen Hasmonean dynasty that he chose to retain were the Sanhedrin (the highest administrative and judicial authority of Jewry) and the high priesthood (*Kōhēn Gādōl*). However, Josephus intimates that the client king had substituted the existing dynasty of high priests, and appointed people who were his loyal supporters. "After the death of these (Hasmonean) kings, the constitution became an aristocracy, and the high priest were entrusted with the leadership of the nation."[49] Important for an assessment of the Zealots' contribution to the revolt, is the Herodian modification of the high priestly office. The analysis of J. Jeremias shows that Herod meant to use these traditional institutions to his own advantage. Thus he ignored the fact that the hereditary nature of the high priesthood was based on the prescriptions of the Torah. In defiance of the privileges of the ancient and legitimate Zadokite family, Herod "arbitrarily" retrenched and appointed high priests. It is certain that the decline of the high priesthood began in this era, for the ruling priestly aristocracy was the consequence of an abrogation of the traditional customs.[50] Josephus relates to his readers that some high priests, like Ananias, used their wealth "to attract those who were willing to receive bribes. Costobar and

Saul also on their own part collected gangs of villains."[51] These actions doubtlessly contributed to the disintegration of the social order.

Richard Horsley, evaluating the role played by the high priests of that time, perceives an escalating "spiral of violence" in Roman-dominated Judea. The peasantry did not accept the rule of Herod as legitimate, especially as it was they who mostly had to bear the brunt of that structural violence. The reality of landlessness meant that many impoverished peasants had to seek alternative forms of labour. Even the sacred customs and texts from the Torah were distorted into oppressive rules, which added to their destitution. "The high-priestly aristocracy both concurred in and profited by the oppressive structure of the imperial situation - and preached pacifism to the people."[52]

The primary obligation of the Jewish peasantry was the traditional tithes. Support of the elaborate priesthood and temple apparatus in Jerusalem was understood as an obligation to God. According to Horsley and Hanson the former Hasmonean regime in all probability had lessened the tributary demands on the people of the land. This drastically changed. "Now Roman tribute was superimposed on the tithes and other taxes to the temple and priesthood."[53] This double taxation resulted in peasants becoming hopelessly indebted and their indebtedness became a mechanism of control in the hands of the wealthy and the powerful. The enveloping spiral of peasant indebtedness, double taxation, poverty, and loss of land meant that "surplus wealth flowed into, and piled up in, Jerusalem." This,

however, was not ploughed back into the peasant community. Instead of benefiting from the surplus capital, the peasantry was then trapped by the Herodian and priestly aristocracy by an exploitative stratagem of high-interest loans.[54] It is thus logical that during the revolt of 66-73 C.E., the Zealots' acts of vengeance against the upperclasses would centre on a redistribution of wealth.

Besides the repressive hold of the high priestly junta over the peasantry, attention is drawn by Baron to "the deep cleavage within the priesthood itself." The main contingent of priests concentrated around Jerusalem and had little personal contact with the people in the rural areas. Despite the peasantry's attachment to the distant capital, they largely depended on the local synagogue to provide for their pastoral needs. The ordinary (lower) clergy (*kōhēn hedyot*), like the masses, resented the greed of the religious hegemony.[55] Ananias (high priest 6-15 C.E.) like some of his predecessors and successors "in the new hierarchy, had control of great wealth ..."[56] It is therefore not surprising that the ordinary priests increasingly identified themselves with the plight of the starving masses. Josephus, himself being a member of the priestly aristocracy, recalled that the principal high priestly families kept goon squads, bands of ruffians, which they would send out to "take by force the tithes of the priests; nor did they refrain from beating those who refused to give ... So it happened at that time that those of the priests who in olden days were maintained by the tithes now starved to death."[57]

The high priestly class, enriching themselves illegally, was partly

responsible for the peasants' indebtedness and eventual landlessness. The hierarchical exploitation of the *kōhēn hedyot* resulted in the latter forging close ties with the *'am ha-aretz*. It is thus not difficult to see why some of these lower priests later gained position in the Zealot party, whose nucleus was drawn from the peasantry. At this point it becomes necessary to consider the specific contribution of the Zealots proper to the revolt. However, because the latter are frequently confused or equiparated with a group called 'the Sicarii', we also need to focus attention on their role.

THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

> One thing is certain: these Jews were activists of their time who did not believe in toleration and in patiently waiting for the betterment of the fate of their nation.
>
> - Stephen Benko

The Sicarii: Political Assassins

The group of "terrorists" called the Sicarii, beyond all doubt contributed during the fifties and sixties to precipitate Jewish Palestine into a war situation. Josephus describes their extremely aggressive tactics as follows:

> (They) committed murders in broad daylight in the heart of the city. The festivals were their special season ... carrying short daggers concealed under their clothing, with which they stabbed their enemies. Then, when they fell, the murderers joined in the cries of indignation and, through this plausible behaviour, were never discovered. [58]

E. Mary Smallwood traces the historical background against which the Sicarii's actions should be evaluated. She perceives the abolition of the monarchy and the resumption of direct Roman rule in 44 C.E. to be the direct cause of terrorist activities. At first the

newly appointed equestrian governors ("procurators") gained limited success at suppression, but the repeated disturbances eventually plunged Judea into anarchy. By the late fifties the extremists had secured such a hold on the province that the period 44-66 C.E. could be described as predominantly the story of progressive unrest, tension, and disorder.[59] Kidnapping for ransom was increasingly employed as a method to terrorize the ruling elite, resulting in the emigration of many upper class Jews.[60] Besides economic distress, the sheer brutality of procurator Gessius Florus (64-66 C.E.) became a factor that provoked terrorist tactics and the eventual outbreak of the Great Revolt. The end of Josephus' *Antiquities* narrative contains a clear accusation against him: "It was Florus who constrained us to take up war with the Romans for we preferred to perish together rather than by degrees."[61] A band of Sicarii then seized the Dead sea fortress of Masada and massacred its Roman garrison.[62]

In the summer of 66 C.E., at the Feast of the Wood Carrying in Jerusalem, urban-based Sicarii mingled with the crowd that went into the Temple to make offerings and sacrifices. They hid curved daggers, called *sicae*, beneath their clothes, and stabbed their target without any possibility of being discovered. The "terrorists", first having targeted those who they regarded as collaborators, proceeded to execute them. They "easily assassinated any that they pleased. They would frequently appear with arms in the villages of their foes and would plunder and set them on fire."[63] Their first victim was a central personality in Jewish society, the high priest Jonathan. In Horsley and Hanson's view the extremists

> attacked the symbol of the Jewish "nation" and religion, but a symbol that was then far from a positive one for the masses of people, since the high priest had become a symbol of the aristocracy's collaboration with Roman rule as well as of exploitation of the people. [64]

It is because of this method of selective assassination that they became known as the Sicarii (Greek: *Sikarioi*) or 'dagger men'. Josephus, referring in his war narrative to "a new species of banditti", remarked that the panic created was more alarming than the calamity itself.[65] It was probably they who set fire to the house of Ananias the high priest and to the palaces of Agrippa and queen Berenice. They also burned the public archives which held the records of debts (*archaiai*). What is striking is that the Sicarii were "highly discriminate and always directed their attacks against fellow Jews and not against Roman soldiers or officials."[66] Their strategy focused on the collaborating Jewish ruling elite: the priestly aristocracy, the Herodian families, and other notables.

Although these dagger men were aggressively involved in the initial stages of the rebellion, most were killed (including their leader Menahem) and the rest were driven out of Jerusalem. They took refuge in the fortress of Masada for it was then being held by other Sicarii under Eleazar ben Jair.[67] There they remained without contributing further to the revolt. When the Romans at the end of the war attacked Masada, the Sicarii (not the Zealots) committed mass suicide: 960 men, women and children, including Eleazar. Some other Sicarii later agitated in Egypt and Cyrene against Roman rule.[68]

What is interesting in Josephus' writings, is that the commanders of the Sicarii, Menahem and Eleazar ben Jair, were both descendants of Judas the Galilean, who co-founded the Fourth Philosophy in 6 C.E. According to the primary source Judas and Saddok already, at the start of the first century, nurtured an unconquerable passion for freedom. He further discloses that Menahem, like Judas Galileaus, was a teacher (*sophistēs*).[69] Reflecting on this relation, Robert Seltzer perceives it as "a continuous history throughout most of the century."[70] The Sicarii possessed the same readiness "to submit to death and to permit vengeance to fall on kinsmen and friends if only they may avoid calling any man master." They finally believed that God "would be their zealous helper" if they stood firm and did not shrink from whatever measures might be necessary.[71] It would be fair to state that the Sicarii's vindictive actions generated the necessary pre-revolt revolutionary climate - another antecedent factor which stimulated a substantial number of peasants/bandits to become "Zealots".

The Zealots Proper

Josephus' depiction of a specific social phenomenon that occurred during the years preceding the Great Revolt, introduces yet another form of popular resistance. A certain Annibas, right at the beginning of the procuratorship of Fadus (44-46 C.E.), led a number of armed Jews from Perea against the people of Philadelphia - a Hellenistic city. Annibas was executed by Fadus and two of his co-conspirators were banished. A troop of bandits was led by the

'arch-brigand' (*archilēstēs*) Tholomaus, making raids in Idumea and Arabia, until he too was captured and executed.[72] A sizeable portion of the population had become outlaws and whole towns were ruined. As the rich were obviously their target, many wealthy Jews left their estates in search of safer surroundings among the Gentiles. Throughout the years the Roman authorities tried to suppress the banditry militarily. In fact, a considerable number of brigands had been crucified, especially during the procuratorships of Cumanus (45-52 CE) and Felix (52-60 CE).[73] Yet, despite these measures, banditry multiplied dramatically and even more reckless, retaliatory raids and insurrections were carried out. Horsley and Hanson's inferences lean heavily on the insights of Eric Hobsbaum when they assert that the social bandits actually righted wrongs and functioned as champions of the common people. The social bandit, who generally shares the fundamental values and religion of the peasant society "is viewed as a hero of righteousness and a symbol of the people's hope for a restoration of a more just order."[74]

The party which eventually became known as 'the Zealots', grew out of a number of these brigand bands that descended upon Jerusalem. In Josephus' account of the occurrence his derogatory phrases again reveal his pro-Roman bias and hostility to the revolutionary forces, but it is nevertheless a confirmation of the coalition-theory. The historian also alludes to their religious motivation, albeit in a disparaging manner. "In the end, satiated with their pillage of the country, the brigand chiefs of all these scattered bands joined forces, now merged into one pack of villainy, stole into poor

Jerusalem ..."[75]

The Zealot party was formed during the winter of 67-68 C.E. though, in D. Rhoads' view, its roots should be traced back to the summer of 66, when a violent confrontation emerged between the citizens of Jerusalem and Roman troops under the procurator Florus. Procuratorial abuse of power marked his rule, as his resolve to capture the Temple clearly shows. The antagonized populace protested, and the mediating high priests alone had to govern the city. However, the high priestly junta insisted upon subservience to the imperial system in spite of Florus' abuses. The lower clergy, in co-operation with the revolutionary bandit leaders, "capitalized on the mood of the populace" and rebelled.[76] In Rhoads' reconstruction then, the lower priests provided the initiative and main leadership.

Horsley's approach to the question of origin, is quite different. He locates the Zealots within the existing conflict-ridden socio-political context.[77] It was already noted that attempts to suppress the banditry by military force were not successful. Particularly the attempts by Roman general Vespasian's army failed to suppress the brigands. Despite the fact that he devastated whole villages and killed many by the fall of 67, there was still an upsurge of banditry. The reason is to be found in the sequence of military events: as the Roman troops moved into northwestern Judea, scores of peasants fled before the Roman advances. These fugitives formed bands of brigands and a number of them converged on Jerusalem, forging a coalition as they entered the city. In a second wave, still more peasants-turned-bandits from the country-

side joined their ranks.[78]

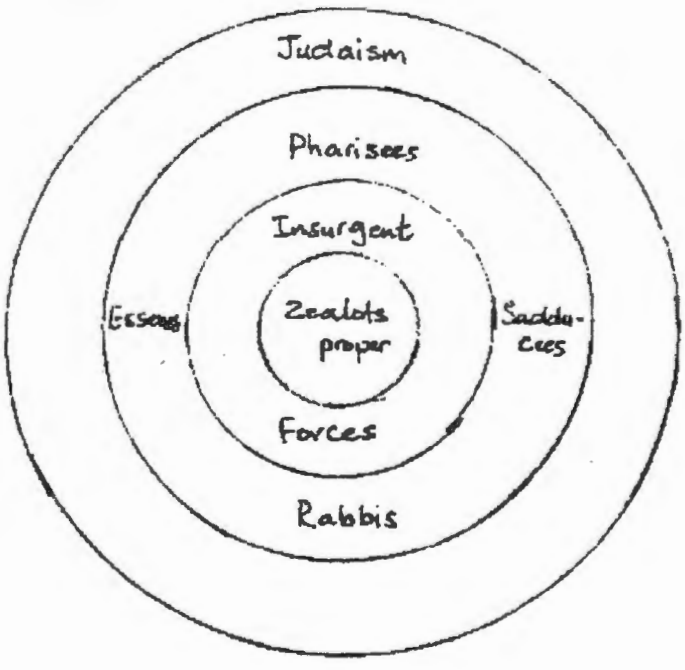
The very first action of this coalition, which then started to call itself "the Zealots", was an attack on certain Herodian nobles or royalists. High priests such as Ananus and Jesus son of Gamala who were then in control of Jerusalem, retaliated and drove them into the temple courtyard, forcing them to take refuge in the inner court.[79] The Zealots, imprisoned in the Temple appealed to allies from Idumea - the district south of Judea - to rescue them. These Idumaeans managed to enter the city and liberated them from the inner court, in the process killing Ananus and Jesus son of Gamala. The Zealots then took effective control of the city, and purged more distinguished citizens whom they regarded as collaborators. These desperadoes, as Josephus calls them, first murdered Antipas, one of the most influential men in the city to whom all the public funds were entrusted; finally "other persons of high reputation."[80] Morton Smith is therefore right when he says that we may plausibly see in the Zealot party the representatives of "principally Judean, peasant piety, hostile alike to the rich of the city, the upper priesthood of the Temple, and of course, the foreign rulers."[81]

Their second major action consisted of the revolutionary idea of ousting the priestly oligarchic families and electing commoners to high priestly offices by lot.[82] The established high priestly families were upset when "the scum and offscourings of the whole country ... brigands of such rank impiety as to pollute even that hallowed ground", elected a simple country priest to serve in the

highest religious office.[83] Ironically the Zealots' control of Jerusalem waned as the leaders of the coalition themselves began to struggle for personal power and position. The internecine strife led to the Zealots' demise, terminating their significance as insurgent force against oppressive rule in Jewish Palestine.

The Zealotic 'Ethic of Vengeance'

In order to assess the possibility of such an ethic, one needs to consider inner and outer concentric circles of similarities and dissimilarities in relation to other groups. It is by way of comparison and contrast that the particularity of the Zealots can be brought to the fore. In our diagram the outermost circle represents the broad Judaic ethical tradition, which undergirded the views of all Jewish associations. The peculiar stance of the Zealots in the innermost circle is reached by way of comparing them to groups in the outer circle (greater differences) and those in the inner circle (greater similarities).



Firstly, the Zealots' actions were rooted in one of the most important principles of Judaism, namely that it is difficult, even impossible, to separate religious, political, and socio-economic motives. Richard Horsley stresses that the Zealot movement had "a strong religious dimension as well as a political dimension, the two being inseparable in traditional societies as in ancient Judea."[85] It should be noticed that when the Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E., the Torah was the only spiritual possession of the Jews.[86] This means that the biblical understanding of God and world was the basis for understanding the dialectic between religion and politics - such as the post-Exodus and Deuteronomic reiteration of love for God and neighbour. Josephus' (probably sarcastic) comment that the Zealots not only knew the biblical prophecies of doom, but fulfilled them, is an indication of the revolutionists' religio-political *Selbstverständnis* in relation to their sociological context.

> For there was an ancient saying of inspired men that the city would be taken and the sanctuary burnt to the ground by right of war, whensoever it should be visited by sedition and native hands should be the first to defile God's sacred precincts. This saying the Zealots did not disbelieve; yet they lent themselves as instruments of its accomplishment. [87]

The coalescence of theological and socio-political motives is based on the wholistic Judaic approach which makes their experience of economic repression a profoundly theological matter. George F. Moore elaborates the foundations of ancient Judaism, linking dogma to moral conduct.

> In Judaism the whole range of religious observances, the morality prescribed or commanded by it, and the specific type of its piety, are all integral and inseparable parts of a revealed religion, and

> correlated to the revelation of God's nature and character ...' ee

The Zealots, refusing to divorce faith from other existential strata, saw no moral contradiction between their religious beliefs and their political actions. This Judaic accent on wholism corresponds with the authentic African values of corporateness and relationism. Within an oppressive context an ethic of religio-political quietism is thus an alien option both from an African and Judaic perspective.

Secondly, the Zealotic ethic of vengeance could also be compared with the wider concentric circle of Pharisaic, Sadducean, rabbinic, and Essene views. Reflecting on society and religion in the Second Temple period, J. Klausner notes that the ethical concern of Pharisaic Judaism was with the existing world. The Zealotic effort to hasten the millennium was not only unrealistic or inept, but also rejected on theological grounds. As long as Israel remained under foreign domination the Pharisees did not foresee the coming of God's kingdom until the "End of Days", and then only after a "painstaking" process of evolution. While prophetic socialism did not shun the possibility that the existing situation could be reformed, the endeavours to effect societal change must be realistic and practical. In Klausner's view none was more careful than the Pharisees to warn against eschatologists - those who would "force the End". He further claims that

> the early Tannaim, who lived before the destruction of the second temple - at a time when the messianic idea was in fact political - were loathe to make frequent mention of it for fear of incensing the Romans, who with some justification saw

> the Zealots and other Jewish rebels as being inspired by the messianic idea of liberation. [89]

Josephus' account of the philosophy of Judas the Galilean and Saddok the Pharisee gives an insight into the *realpolitik* of Pharisaic Judaism. The Fourth Philosophy, says the Jewish historian, "agrees with the views of the Pharisees in everything except their unconquerable passion for freedom..." Furthermore, God would eagerly join in promoting the success of their plans -

> all the more if with high devotion in their hearts they stood firm and did not shrink from the bloodshed that might be necessary ... They think little of submitting to death in unusual forms and permitting vengeance to fall on kinsmen and friends if only they may avoid calling any man master. [90]

As a pragmatic ethic Pharisaic Judaism could not endorse the strategy of passionate confrontations. Max Weber calls the Pharisaic handling of tradition "ethical rationalism". Concerning vengeance, the Sadducean practice (grounded on a very strict interpretation of the law) clung to the letter: they demanded the literal fulfilment of the *lex talion* "an eye for an eye". But this was applicable in case of personal offences and contained no broader, political implications. Josephus' remark that the Sadducees "accomplish practically nothing" is possibly an indication of their politically conservative stance.[91] If it is taken into account that the Sadducees were mostly the adherents of the priestly aristocracy, one can understand their conservatism. The analysis of Weber shows that Pharisaic practice, on the other hand, searched for the "ratio" behind the prescriptions and reinterpreted them. Instead of the literalist view of "an eye for an eye", monetary compensation was acceptable. Moreover, the Pharisees did not support the Zealotic

pursuance of vengeance because the peasants were, from a theological point of view, impure people. The Pharisees, as *perushim*, segregated themselves not only from the Hellenes, but also from the "countrymen", the "ignorant" who did not observe the law. It is significant that Phariseehood was primarily urban in nature, as the form of holiness which they practised "increasingly prevented the point of gravity of its adherents from being found among peasants. It is no accident that *'am ha-aretz*, the non-Pharisees, originally were 'the countrymen'."[92]

The rabbis (*soferim*) rejected the religious rationalization of the need for revenge, because God was to consummate it presently or in the eschatological future. It was only after the downfall of Jewry through the destruction of the Temple that the rabbis realized the seriousness of the ethical problem of repressed and sublimated revenge. The rabbinical struggle against the religious rationalization of revenge indicates "essentially that it did not remain hidden to them how strong a factor the need for revenge ... actually was in Judaism of late antiquity."[93]

It is noted by Josephus that alongside the Pharisees and Sadducees the Essenes constituted the third "school of thought." The fundamental doctrine of this major religious association among the Jews was that all things are to be left in the hands of God.[94] The "tremendous" or "terrible oaths" sworn by a novice on initiation, reflect their opinion on revolutionary violence:

> ...first that he will practise piety toward the Deity; next that he will observe justice towards men (sic): that he will wrong none whether of his own mind or under another's orders;

> that he will for ever hate the unjust and fight the battle of the just; that he will for ever keep faith with all men, especially with the powers that be, since no ruler attains his office save by the will of God. [95]

F.F. Bruce, however, argues that the Essenes were not pacifists in principle.[96] The observation is borne out by Josephus' account of an Essene named John who was a commander in the war against the Romans.[97] Whether this occurrence can be seen as an affirmation of the Zealotic ethic of vengeance, is to be doubted. The primary source states that the Essenes could do nothing without orders from their superiors. Only two things were left to individual discretion: "Members may of their own motion help the deserving, when in need, and supply food to the destitute."[98] John the Essene's motivation for partaking in the revolt probably should be placed within the framework of compassion, and not a desire to avenge himself on the religious or political rulers.

In the third inner concentric circle we find the other insurgent forces with whom the Zealots should be compared and contrasted. Without exaggerating the differences between the warring factions, an effort is made here to motivate the specific acts of the Zealots proper. If the insurrectionists' depiction by Jewish scholar Moshe Perlman as being "devoutly religious and familiar with the Bible" has validity, then Josephus' pro-Roman utterances that they were "scum", "villains", and "the nation's dregs", are suspect. It was a pervasive claim among the revolutionaries that God was their ally in battle, based on the supposition that they were adherents and defenders of the Torah.[99] Moreover, they believed that they defended Jerusalem as God's dwelling place. The implication seems

to be that the warring factions reckoned that they could count on God's decisive assistance because they were supporting their commitment of faith by aggressive military actions.[100]

Discussing the connection between the motives and beliefs of the Fourth Philosophy, brigands, Sicarii, and Zealots, E. Mary Smallwood contends that

> the Zealots were inspired by the same attitude to the law, the same dream of the recovery of independence, and the same hostility to foreign domination and hence to Jewish collaboration with Rome, which was rooted in the tradition of Jewish nationalism going back to the days of the Maccabees. [101]

A striking difference between the insurgents and the religious aristocracy (who did not as a body approve of the war), was that the latter did not perceive Roman rule as a threat to Jewish religion. In fact, the advantage of the *pax Romana*, as they saw it, was the creation of space wherein religious freedom was relatively secure. The rebels, on the other hand, experienced imperial rule as such, as undermining Jewish religion.[102]

Over against the revolutionaries' assumptions Josephus notes that in the ancient Jewish history, God alone struck down the mighty Assyrian army. The claim of the rebels that they were helped by God is therefore presumptuous. The historian's condemnation of the Zealots' "exhibition of vice" illustrates the Pharisaic stance that the coming of God's kingdom cannot be enforced.[103] It seems likely that the revolutionaries saw themselves as establishing the direct rule of God - a theocracy. It is suggested by Brandon that they wanted to concretize the aspirations which stemmed from the Yahwist

Heilsgeschichte through establishing theocratic rule. The conception of a theocracy was based on the supposition that they were part of God's chosen people. The exodus, the settle in the holy land, and especially the memory of the successful Maccabean revolt, clearly demonstrated what zeal for Yahweh could accomplish. Undoubtedly many acts of murder and rapine were committed by the Zealot bands, but Zealotism, it has been argued, "must be recognised as a true and inherently noble expression of Jewish religious faith..."[104]

Josephus reverses these theocratic assumptions by arguing that the recourse to arms had been futile, for they only resulted in the destruction of the city and Temple. In his view the whole matter of vengeance should have been left in God's hands. He further argues that whereas the evil Assyrians deserved to be subjected to divine vengeance, the Romans did not.

> For it is, I suppose, the duty of the occupants of holy ground to leave everything to the arbitrament of God and to scorn the aid of human hands, can they but conciliate the Arbiter above. But as for you, what have you done that is blessed by the lawgiver ... native hands have polluted those divine precincts, which even Romans reverenced from afar, forgoing many customs of their own in deference to your law. And after all this do you expect Him, thus outraged, to be your ally? With such, I ween, our king besought aid against the Assyrian, when God in one night laid low that mighty host! And so like are the deeds of the Romans to those of the Assyrian, that you may look for a like vengeance yourselves! Did not he accept money from our king on condition that he would not sack the city, and then come down, in violation of his oaths, to burn the sanctuary, whereas the Romans are but demanding the customary tribute, which our fathers paid for theirs? Once they obtain this, they neither sack the city, nor touch the holy things, but grant you everything else, the freedom of your families, the enjoyment of your possessions and the protection of your

> sacred laws. It is surely madness to expect God to show the same treatment to the just as to the unjust. Moreover, He knows how, at need, to inflict instant vengeance... [105]

The 'holy war' motif is closely related to the idea of establishing a theocracy. Martin Hengel's highlighting of this motif brings the apocalyptism of these oppressed to the fore. In contrast to the hopelessness of the present, they place all their expectations in the prospect of an imminent establishment of God's sovereignty. This must be preceded by the "final battle" of Israel against its oppressors. Cooperation between God and "the true Israel" took place in the form of a holy war, which had to be conducted by means of guerilla warfare.[106] From the Zealotic perspective political violence was both sacred and necessary to re-establish God's justice. The revolutionary nationalism of the Zealots and the other warring factions thus had a strong apocalyptic tinge.[107] Their slogan "no master but God" reveals a theocratic ideal under the High Priest as God's representative.[108]

Josephus alludes to the possibility that the Zealot revolt had been motivated by messianic expectation. The insurrectionists felt inspired by an ancient oracle that a fellow-Jew "would become ruler of the world. This they understood to mean someone of their own race, and many of their wise men went astray in their interpretation of it."[109] The wholistic cadre within which they operated, is evident: the imminent establishment of the messianic kingdom would mean economic reform, ameliorating the conditions of the poor. In Robert Beckwith's view there can be little doubt that the revolutionaries were influenced by the Hebrew Scriptures. They may have interpreted Dan 7:13 to mean that the "Son of Man" (sic) prophecy

would be fulfilled during the 'fourth world-empire', which was the destruction of Rome.[110] In the same vein Benko reasons that "the extremists" considered the head of the Roman empire as the chief opponent of God, an idea which eventually developed into the conception of the Antichrist. The expectation that the last attack of the hostile powers against the people of God will be under the leadership of an Antichrist, was based upon Hebrew Scripture passages such as Daniel 11, and also became part of the later New Testament (I John 2:18-22, II John 7, Revelations 13). It is therefore "quite normal to assume" that the revolutionaries saw in the Roman emperors Gaius Caligula, Claudius, and Nero adversaries of the Messiah (*mashi'ah*), that is, Antichrists.[111]

The studies on the social-economic realities in ancient Jewish society by Baron and Jeremias give prominence to the immense gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. This class conflict which permeated Jewish society, reveals another reason why specifically the aristocracy became the recipients of the Zealots' wrath. The mere fact that the vast majority of the coalition's members were peasants, singularly attacking the city aristocrats, confirms this observation. As Josephus expresses it: "Chief objects of their lust for blood were the brave and nobly born, the former being victims of their fear, the latter of their envy..."[112] The high priestly junta, the Herodians, and much of the wealthy aristocracy, doubtlessly collaborated with the foreign Roman rulers. Horsley and Hanson assert that the ruling elite not only made no attempt to represent the interests of the people, but contributed to the breakdown of the society "in a violently predatory manner, yielding

virtual class warfare."[113] It was particularly the peasants who were exploited and economically deprived for decades, so that the brigands-turned-Zealots, attempting to right the wrongs, felt compelled to confront those with whom they had ancient quarrels.

The Zealots' actions had also been politically motivated. In Herod's time and later, the Roman governors themselves claimed the right of appointment, so that the high priesthood became the exclusive haven of certain families. When the Zealots besieged the Temple, they not only elected an ordinary (but legitimate Zadokite) priest as the head officiant in the services, they also selected officers for the whole institutional structure of the Temple. In effect, they were taking the revolutionary action of trying to oust the reign of injustice and replace it with a new government.[114] Clearly the legitimacy of the existing priesthood was seriously called into question, for the arbitrary appointment of the high priests was undemocratic. The deepest motive therefore underpinning the election of the common priest Phanni by lot, and the establishment of an alternative government, was "to annul the rights of the oligarchy in the High Priesthood and to democratize the office of the High Priest."[115]

The possibility of vengeance as another reason for the revolt, should also be considered. Josephus' arraignment of the Zealots' actions was based on the Pharisaic premise that God, who wreaks vengeance on Israel's enemies in the here and now or in the beyond, does not need military assistance. The Zealots, however, "... copied every deed of ill, nor was there any previous villainy recor-

ded in history that they failed zealously to emulate. And yet they took their title from their professed zeal for virtue..."[116] It needs to be recognized that in the Jewish tradition zealotry was indeed a virtue as made evident by Yahweh's approval of Phinehas son of Eleazar: "for he was zealous as I am for my honour among them" (Num. 25:10, NIV). According to Numbers 31 Phinehas had been commissioned by Moses to lead Israel in a holy war of revenge against the Midianites. Being zealous for God and the Torah became an acknowledged dynamic in the fabric of ancient Jewish society. It is therefore not strange that the Fourth Division (*Nezikin*) of the Mishnah lays down the penalty that "If a man stole a sacred vessel ... the zealots may fall upon him."[117] On the basis of these above-mentioned Scriptural and rabbinic literature, and the permeation of the zealous ideal in the late Second Temple period (*War* 7:268-70), Brandon posits that Phinehas became the traditional Zealot prototype (Phinehas *redivivus*). The later Zealots followed his example and waged holy wars of vengeance. "Phinehas was ... the man, 'zealous for his God', who devoted himself wholeheartedly, in rigorous action, both to ensuring his countrymen's complete loyalty to God's law and to vindicating Israel by war against the heathen oppressor."[118] The Zealots' experience of social-economic deprivation and political powerlessness resulted in focused enmity vis-à-vis the wealthy and powerful.

Richard Horsley argues that the Zealots did not execute mob lynchings, neither did they - in a wild, unrestrained rampage - strike back at the rich in violence equal to what they had long suffered themselves. Their charge against the collaborating, illegitimate

rulers was: treason.[119] Yet, in a deliberate manner they singled out the Herodian nobles, with whom they had "ancient quarrels," for attack. He further suggests that the peasants-turned-Zealots knew the royalists at least by association and reputation. The Herodians, being wealthy and powerful citizens, probably were holders of large estates on which ordinary Jewish families worked as tenants and to whom peasants became indebted. This observation is confirmed by the Josephan account.[120] The "ancient quarrels" had thus to do with landownership and related matters, such as loans. Especially during the pre-revolt years the aristocratic families had contributed to the disintegration of the social fabric. Josephus' reference to certain royalists who "collected gangs of villains ... (that) were lawless and quick to plunder the property of those weaker than themselves", is an indication of their increasingly predatory behaviour.[121] "Now the displaced peasantry was striking back in retaliation..."[122]

Conclusion

The major source does not provide a warrant for affirming 'Zealots' to be the proper name of any movement prior to the Great Jewish Revolt of 66-73 C.E. However, the phenomenon of social banditry, especially as it manifested itself in Judea, has a direct bearing on our understanding of the aims and actions of the Zealot force. Whereas banditry had been a pre-political effort in rural areas to right the wrongs of peasants, the coalition of brigand bands in Jerusalem consciously focused on a religio-social programme. They aimed to bring popular justice to those who, they believed, were unrighteously wealthy, powerful, and betraying them to the Romans.

The Judean common people had looked to the brigand bands for leadership in taking vengeance and restoring justice. Because the revolutionaries who besieged the temple, and even Jerusalem for a while, were peasants-bandits turned Zealots, we should view their actions as a politically-conscious effort to redress historic wrongs.

Unlike the Fourth Philosophy and Sicarii, whose leaders were teachers, the nucleus of the Zealot association consisted of poor peasants (non-Pharisaic *'am ha-aretz*). Their retributive actions should be evaluated in the light of the following religio-political variables.

1. The Zealotic ethic of vengeance was rooted in the ancient Judaic principle of wholism. Political tyranny and economic repression were therefore profoundly theological issues. Whilst the Pharisees shared this basic view with them, their practical-ethical rationalism precluded the idea of a holy war of revenge. The Essenes, though not total pacifists, believed that things should be left in the hands of God. Josephus himself adhered to the Pharisaic and rabbinic view that divine vengeance is God's sole prerogative, rendering human assistance redundant.

2. The Zealots proper shared with the other militant factions an imminent expectation of God's kingship. The struggle for liberation contained a clear apocalyptic spearhead. Within the oppressive situation that prevailed in the late Second

Temple period, political violence was seen as a necessary means against Jewish collaborators and the alien Roman imperialists. These were the elements of a revolutionary theocratic ideal, which would neither allow foreign rule nor the pragmatic space of religious freedom that satisfied the high priestly aristocracy. Whereas the Pharisees argued that the *parousia* cannot be "forced", the rebels were inspired by the idea of the imminence of the messianic kingdom.

3. The peculiarity of Zealotism is reflected in the following: (i) They modelled the restoration of the high priesthood on traditional lines, namely, through the election of a candidate from the legitimate Zadokite lineage. (ii) The establishment of a democratically elected government in Jerusalem. (iii) The selective attacks on certain Herodian nobles ("purging") indicate that indiscriminate revenge was not a Zealotic motive, but rather seen as the punishment of "traitors". Being peasants themselves, the Zealots linked their destitution (especially the experience of landlessness and the burden of taxation) to the repressive features of Herodian landownership. The religious (holy) war was therefore simultaneously class or economic warfare. The close relation between social banditry in ancient Judean society and the Zealot association, requires an examination of this phenomenon within our context. We conclude that an application of the zealous ideal in social banditry is difficult within the black South African situation.[123]

In the final chapter we would need to consider critically the relevance of the Zealotic ethic of vengeance from a black theological perspective. Factors that bear upon the main thesis are:

Firstly, their redress of historic grievances ("ancient quarrels") demonstrates a refusal to acquiesce in religio-political oppression. It is this prolonged quest for justice that becomes paradigmatic for oppressed South Africans, and not necessarily their violent methods pursued to realize that goal. Though the latter is the case, the Zealotic ethic still mirrors the essential difference between deliberate, punitive acts and indiscriminate revenge. A hermeneutical interpretation of the Jewish *lex talion* ("an eye for an eye") may shed light on this distinction.

Secondly, the humanitarian prescriptions of the Hebrew Scriptures possibly motivated the Zealots. Their seizure of the Temple, the replacement of the high priest, and the discriminate killing of the city's treasurer and other prominent figures jointly constitutes a violent attempt to redistribute the nation's capital. Whilst their "purging" of dignitaries and the leaders' internecine strife for personal power cannot be condoned, their quest for economic justice as such remains a cardinal issue. A post-apartheid theological "ethic of vengeance" too cannot avoid a redress of the economic balance in the South African context. The significance of the Judaic sabbatical principles, with their focus on social equality via a redistribution of capital or wealth, must therefore be rediscovered and applied in our society.

CHAPTER FOUR

THOMAS MÜNTZER, DESTROYER OF THE UNGODLY

> In Müntzer's soul there is much that is disturbed and savage, but through this wilderness and this darkness in him a brilliant red flower glows - his love for his people, for humanity.
> - Wilhelm Zimmermann

Hypotheses

1. The theological ethical stance of Müntzer vividly raises the question whether or not God's children may become her/his instruments of wrath in an oppressive situation.
2. His dialectical interpretation of especially Romans 13 affirms the divine right of civil authorities to govern. Tyrants, however, lose this position so that revolution (political revenge), in stead of civil obedience, becomes the responsibility of the Church.
3. Müntzer's understanding of the reformatory "common priesthood of all" means in moral terms that the existing gap between the wealthy and the poor must be eradicated, albeit by violent means.
4. This reformer's history shows up an initial appeal to persons in authority to take heed of the plight of the poor. It is only when this fails that he resorts to retributive measures, that is, the infliction of punishment on those who he perceives to be sinners or wrongdoers.
5. The enactment of vengeance against the godless will usher in the New Jerusalem (Millennium). This divine instruction is directly revealed to God's destroyer by the Spirit, rather than via the interpretation of Scripture.

Hero or Villain?

One of the methodological problems involved in analyzing Müntzer's views, is that the major portion of his writings contains accusations against his contemporary, Martin Luther. Inevitably this requires the interpreter to take account of the latter's standpoint. A superficial reading would render Müntzer and Luther arch-enemies, eliminating their common ground. Dieter Forte's play, *Luther, Müntzer, and the Bookkeepers of the Reformation*, performed before audiences since 1971, is a case in point. It satirically portrays Luther as a harsh anti-peasant conservative, whilst Müntzer comes across as the ardent defender of the poor. While Luther's notorious calling upon the German authorities to cut down the revolting peasants without mercy can only be condemned, a rigid casting of Müntzer and Luther into these roles, is too simplistic.[1] Both were against religio-political tyranny.

In fact, at the start of the Protestant Reformation, these two theologians were seemingly in the same camp. Ronald Thiemann even discovers the "hints of an early irenic relationship."[2] Although Gert Wendelborn agrees with this assessment, he argues that notwithstanding the early irenic relationship, their theology had never been identical.[3] By 1524 their continuous execrations of one another, voiced in sermons, letters, pamphlets and table-talk, developed into open confrontation. Sadly, as Wendelborn shows, the relationship regressed into more than open opposition. Their enmity became deadly ("einer Todfeindschaft").[4] Because of the estrangement, many of their respective followers have set them in the

mutually exclusive mythical forms of 'hero' and 'villain'. The subtleties and complexity of their unique contributions were thus ignored. Luther succeeded institutionally where Müntzer failed. In the process Luther's response to unjust rulers became 'normative' for a large section of Protestantism while that of Müntzer was thrust into obscurity. The essential impulse of Müntzer's response at the same time remains alive and a viable option among oppressed people still today. This 'theology of vengeance', as seen in the ministry of Müntzer, is discussed in what follows, as a contribution to understanding the theology of God's wrath that continues to influence the faith of the under-classes.

We begin by placing Müntzer in theological context. A brief overview of three versions of "the Müntzer legend" is provided by George Forell. Again, as in the previous chapter, the focus is historical - as a basis of discerning Müntzer's theology of wrath within the context out of which it emerged.

The first version of "the Müntzer legend" was designed by the Lutherans who were anxious to disassociate themselves from the Peasants' War ("Bauernkrieg") of 1524-1526. Soon after Müntzer's death a pamphlet called "Die Historie Thomas Müntzers" was published in which the entire Anabaptist movement was rejected as harbouring actual or potential revolutionaries. Luther himself said in a table-talk of September 1532: "The Anabaptists are evil knaves; they pretend to be full of patience, do not want to bear arms and yet are blood-thirsty..." In this model then, Thomas Müntzer became the violent symbol of the Anabaptists - despite the

fact that some were devout pacifists.[5] He was seen as a 'blanket-symbol' of that brand of Protestantism which Luther and other magisterial reformers sought to reject and demonize.

The second version of "the Müntzer legend", was that advocated by Cochlaeus, composed in late July 1525. Roman Catholics (at the time) held Luther responsible for the Peasants' War, with Müntzer no more than a consequence or by-product of Luther's revolt against the principle of authority. The 19th century 'scientific' school of history, influenced by Leopold von Ranke, gave rise to a reconsideration and rewriting of history to ascertain what actually happened ("wie es eigentlich gewesen"). This resulted *inter alia* in Heinz Mackensen's observation that during the first three centuries after Luther's death, there were few or no efforts at objective evaluation and judgment of historic developments around Protestantism. One consequence was that Müntzer ceased to be regarded as a mere addendum to Wittenberger's words and actions. Along with the passage of time and most recently the ecumenical movement, this school influenced both Roman Catholic and Protestant scholars to increase their efforts at fair and honest interpretations.[6]

The third prevailing version of Müntzer is the Marxist interpretation. Marx commented: "Obscured by theology, the Peasants' Revolt is nonetheless the most revolutionary event in German history."[7] In 1851 a relatively small work by Friedrich Engels was published, titled *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg.* It pictures Müntzer as "the plebeian revolutionary" who embarked upon a philosophy that "borders

on atheism" and a political programme that "borders on Communism."[8] Understandably, this reformer began to have tremendous appeal for Marxists and Communists. Rosa Luxemburg for example characterized him in 1906 as "des edlen Thomas Müntzer" (noble). Inevitably, as Gunter Wirth makes clear, from this perspective Luther became the enemy of the peasants ("den Feind der Bauern").[9]

All these interpretations have been modified and adapted over the years. At the same time they provide a useful typological framework on the study of Müntzer. Hans-Jürgen Goertz is nevertheless correct in pleading for a direct weighing of Müntzer's arguments themselves, rather than in comparison to Luther's. In so doing we would do well to recognize that he was caught up in the late medieval spirit of the time (*Zeitgeist*). It is not easy for us to grasp and reconstruct "the mentality of the time", as Martin Brecht phrases it. He finds, for instance, among the Anabaptists who erected their Kingdom of Zion in Munster during the early 1530s, an intense hope for a Day of Vengeance. In those circles an expectation of the imminent second coming of the Christ who would wreak vengeance on the heathen, was a living and vibrant reality.[10] People experienced basic apocalypticism, namely, the urgent idea of world decline and world renewal. To understand this, brief attention must by given to the development of church-state relations in the late medieval period to the extent that these influenced and gave rise to the ministry of Müntzer and others.

The Late Medieval Church and State Affair

The treatise *Reformatio Sigismundi* anonymously written in the late

1430s, is evidence that discontent over the corruption in church and state manifested itself in various forms (letters, verses, ballads, treatises, sermons, prayers and animal epics of which *Reynard the Fox* is the best known) long before Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on 31 October 1517. In the words of Gerald Strauss: "Their grief was for a society gone awry and a time out of joint."[11] Many factors have contributed to the religious revolution of the sixteenth century. For that reason Catholic historian Joseph Lortz contends that Luther found an "unusually well-prepared soil."[12] Consider for example the influential preaching of the late fifteenth century pastor, Johann Geiler, respectfully tagged "The Trumpet of Strassburg Cathedral." His sermon *The Fifty-Sixth Brood of Fools* in which the ecclesial and civil "power-mad fools" are attacked, established his reputation as a social critic:

> O, you power fool! Were you not fashioned out of the very same clay of which the meanest of your subjects is also made? Or are you composed of more precious stuff? Were you baptised in Malmsey wine instead of water? Do both you and your subjects not pray to the same God...? [13]

Writers like H. Holborn, R. Pascal, T. Lindsay, J. Lortz, A.G. Dickens and F. Hertz agree that in order to understand the Reformation and its principal characters, one cannot sidetrack the political setting which prevailed at the time. In the late Middle Ages, Germany had been divided into numerous, separate States or compact principalities. It is thus understandable that the distinctive political ideal of the times immediately preceding the Reformation, had been "consolidation" or nationalism. The powerful people were the ecclesiastical princes such as the archduke of

Austria and the duke of Burgundy, secular princes, counts and prelates. The imperial Diet of the Empire (*Reichstag*) represented the different estates, but essentially it was an instrument of the German princes who subordinated the count and prelates to themselves.[14]

We also have to take note of the lawlessness of a great section of the German nobles. Obsolete forms of justice were pertinaciously clung to such as the recognition of private vengeance, disregarding both the public interest and the peculiar motives of an offence. The Church and the kings eventually rejected the old idea that retribution was to be left to the individual and his or her kin, and established the principle that the community had to punish the evil-doer.[15] In the Middle Ages blood revenge was open to everyone, and there were many feuds undertaken by workers. The Church's influence on procedural improvements, namely, that the exaction of vengeance is a judicial and not an interpersonal proceeding, has to be acknowledged. Its concern was not revenge, but the reconciliation of the sinner's soul with God. However, the shift to individualism meant that concerns of social justice were largely neglected.[16] Humanism, both inside and outside the Church, indeed possessed the dynamics to effect change, but it lacked a specific social programme.[17]

R. Pascal holds that the papal hierarchy became so demanding, that the Church was increasingly perceived as a foreign exploiter of the people of Germany.[18] An investigation of the period by Steven Ozment affirms that the favourite "revenue-gathering device of the

Curia" was the indulgence, which became a method of recruiting for the papal crusades.[19] Looking at the reality of church abuses from the underside, that is, from the perspective of the laity, he develops the expression: "the burden of late medieval religion." Besides indulgences, the medieval confessions and picture catechisms, which promoted the superstitious fears of people, were also experienced as a burden.[20] It is therefore impossible to understand *Bildersturm* and medieval iconoclasm (which Müntzer condoned) if one does not understand that for a considerable portion of the laity those images epitomized religious tyranny. John Donelly further identifies the intricate relation between the Pope as the embodiment of spiritual power and the Emperor as the personification of secular power, as a central cause for "the decay in the church."[21] The consequence of this Constantinian development was that Christendom began to turn toward the State for support and, ultimately, the latter came to enjoy a well-defined place and function in the vast organisation of Christian social life.[22] In an analysis of fifteenth century German industry, Friedrich Engels links the "helter-skelter of numerous conflicts" between the imperial power and the local imperial authorities to the imposition of oppressive taxes. "The entire weight of the tax burden fell upon the peasants, as well as the serfs and bondsmen of the knights." The autocratic princes and other great landowners began to restrict the use by the peasants of the forests, commons and rivers, or demanded fees for it. Polemical phrases like "the peasantry was being robbed with great dexterity", "the serfs were being wrung dry..." and "justice sold for money" convey the actual experience of the poor.[23]

Eric Gritsch points out that the introduction of money and the modification of local codes added to the peasants' hardship.[24] The growth of commerce produced various distinct groups out of the original medieval citizenry. Right at the top, as the richest, were the patrician families who controlled the cities administratively, and misused their aristocratic background to exploit the city community. At the bottom of all classes, Engels asserts, "was the huge exploited mass of the nation, the peasants."[25] In this period the increasing role of capital resulted in a rural exodus (*Landflucht*), a continuous stream of migration from the countryside to the cities. This alteration of fixed socio-economic relationships by the transformational power of capital, was interpreted as evil.[26]

It is suggested by Norman Birnbaum that the hierarchical structure of the Church paralleled the system of stratification of the society outside it.[27] Engels therefore distinguishes between the high church dignitaries who participated in the exploitation, and the lower clergy who were "nearer to the life of the masses."[28] Particularly frequent was the type of bishop who was "more a feudal lord and a ruthless warrior than a model of a Christian", committing cruelties against the population.[29] While the Church developed an image of being exempt from the injustices of society as a whole, many of the lower clergy lived in misery.[30] It is clear that the suffering of the poor was the outcome of a combination of oppressive religious, political and social-economic conditions. The peasants' shortlived protests and upheavals finally culminated in the widespread Great Peasants' War (*Bauernkrieg*) which erupted in 1524.

Both Luther and Müntzer abhorred the financial exploitation of the German people. Far from being an anti-peasant conservative, Dickens argues, the Wittenberg reformer condemned greed and exploitation wherever he saw them - a condemnation that was built on religious principles. For him the doctrine of unearned justification through a Christ-given faith implied that the purchase of pardons, cash-transactions, and the peddling of indulgences amounted to a doctrine of cheap grace.[31] One can cull from Luther's *Admonition to Peace*, written during the social upheaval, an insight into the peasants' motivation, although he disagreed with their methods. Neither the secular nor the ecclesiastical authorities could be exonerated from blame:

> We have no one on earth to thank for this disastrous rebellion, except you princes and lords, and especially you blind bishops and mad priests and monks, whose hearts are hardened, even to the present day. You do not cease to rant and rave against the holy gospel, even though it is true and that you cannot refute it. In addition, as temporal rulers you do nothing but cheat and rob the people so that you may lead a life of luxury and extravagance. The poor common people cannot bear it any longer ... Well, then, since you are the cause of this wrath of God, it will undoubtedly come upon you, unless you mend your ways in time. [32]

The interrelation between the unrest and the late medieval theology of revolution which emerged in the Constaninian situation, is complicated. The peasants certainly presented their own demands for social and political change, basing it on the teachings of the Wittenberg reformers. Luther's attack on abuses in church and state encouraged the prevalent social discontent, and a spirit of insubordination. He wanted to dissociate his movement from the political violence, but had ironically "released forces hostile to

all duly constituted law and order."[33] The insurrectionists themselves incessantly appealed to "Göttliche Recht" (divine justice).

In other words, the Peasant's War had already been canalized religiously and would have happened, even had there been no Martin Luther or Thomas Müntzer. Yet the new theological element in the insurrection should not be overlooked: the peasants regarded the reformers' concept of the common priesthood of all believers as their vindication for fighting for the ancient right to own part of the soil they tilled."[34] According to Manfred Hannemann the magistrates and territorial governments particularly feared Müntzer's ideas "for their disruptive effect on the existing social and political order."[35] Conversely, the chances for the realization of a reformed Church were heightened by the socio-economic conflicts. Since Müntzer can be regarded as the most radical of the reformers in terms of political, revolutionary action, an evaluation of his involvement in the peasants' struggle serves as a barometer for the assessment of all the clergy who participated in the civil rebellion.[36]

REVOLUTIONARY SPIRITUALISM

> One cannot preach to you of God
> as long as they reign over you.
> - Thomas Müntzer, April 1525

The Storchian Imprint

Although the early years of Müntzer, his upbringing and particulars concerning his academic training are obscure, the biographical stu-

dies of George Williams, Gordon Rupp, George Forell, Eric Gritsch, Hans Hillerbrand, Richard van Dülmen, Hans-Jürgen Goertz and Tom Scott prove helpful in our effort to reconstruct the making of his mind. What is clear nevertheless is that long before he met Luther or read his anti-clerical tracts, Müntzer had already begun to question the medieval Catholic institutions and teachings.[37]

In the autumn of 1517, he attended lectures by Johannes Rhagius Aesticampianus at the University of Wittenberg. There Müntzer was exposed to an array of new influences. The theological climax for him during this period of doubt and searching, had been the public disputation between the Wittenberg reformers Karlstadt, Luther and Melanchton and the Catholic polemicist Johann Eck in Leipzig, in June 1519, which he witnessed silently. The crux of the reformers' argument was that the existing Church constituted an historical deviation from early Christianity. In December 1519 he accepted the position of father confessor to the St. Bernard nuns in the cloister of Beuditz. It was finally in that peaceful setting that he found the necessary time to embark upon "a feverish program of reading."[38]

Acting on a recommendation by Luther, the city council of Zwickau invited Müntzer to be a substitute for John Egranus, head pastor of St. Mary's Church, who was taking leave of absence until October 1520. Arriving in May, it could be said that he launched his "eye-catching public career" in this economically important city.[39] Zwickau's prosperity remained lodged in the hands of a few families, with the result that the city had perhaps sharper class dis-

tinctions than elsewhere; as van Dülmen puts it: "starke soziale Gegensätze."[40] The elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, proudly called it "The Pearl of the Land", but in reality it had been "fertile soil for a social revolution."[41]

Nikolaus Storch, an impoverished weaver, had developed his own brand of revolutionary mysticism among the poor of Zwickau, before Müntzer's arrival. Drawing upon Waldensian and Taborite principles, he announced the impending birth of the New Age (Millennium) and called for the violent overthrow of all political and ecclesiastical government:

> Those in authority live only in lust, consume the sweat and blood of their subjects, eat and drink night and day, hunt, run and kill ... Everyone therefore should arm himself and attack the priests in their fat nests, beating, killing, and strangling them, because once the bellwethers are removed, the sheep are easier to handle. [42]

Into this hotbed of religious and social-political turmoil Thomas Müntzer now stepped, and the first time he ascended the pulpit in May 1520, he attacked the rich beggar-monks. They were the "perverters" of the Church: "The monks have such big mouths that if one would cut off few pounds from their mouths, there would still be enough left with which they could continue their non-sensical prattling." [43]

To the common people, mostly weavers, the attack seemed justified, and they supported the new fluent and powerful preacher. By the end of the summer he had established his version of Lutheranism in Zwickau. During this period Müntzer got involved in the revolutionary movement of Nikolaus Storch (*the Sekta Storchitarum*), whose

argument for direct communication with God as over against reliance on the written Word alone, impressed him. A serious confrontation developed between Müntzer and Egranus, who was the head pastor of St. Mary's and a humanist rationalist preferring gradual change.[44] The tension increased after a visiting priest who had accused Müntzer of heresy, was pelted with dung and stoned by his angry congregation.[45] The city council decided that Egranus and Müntzer should leave Zwickau, and on April 16 the latter was dismissed.[46]

He and a friend, Markus Thomae, arrived on 23 June 1521 in Prague, where they were welcomed by a large crowd as authentic representatives of Wittenberg Lutheranism. Müntzer's drafting of the *Prague Manifesto* during his Bohemian interlude, is an indication that he resumed his attacks on the clergy in characteristic fashion. The elect will receive direct instruction from the Holy Spirit in the forms of dreams, visions, and ecstatic utterances. However, they must first be awakened and undergo the harrowing of fear, which is the beginning of godliness. The work of the bitter Christ on the cross makes a personal cross necessary.[47]

> The time has come when God will separate the wheat from the chaff ... It is a time of harvest. My sickle is sharp and my thoughts are violent for the truth, my lips, my hands, my hair, my soul, my body curse the unbeliever. My beloved Bohemians ... if I cannot demonstrate my competence, let me be a child of death in this life and the life to come. I have no greater pledge to give. [48]

After being ejected from Bohemia, long months of suffering, uncertainty, and restless wandering followed before he finally found a post as pastor in Allstedt.

The Liturgist of Allstedt 1523-24

In comparison with Zwickau, Allstedt was an insignificant country town populated by a few hundred farmers and miners. Situated in northern Thuringia, it was under the jurisdiction of the brother of Frederick the Wise, and administered from Allstedt castle by the local commissioner, Hans Zeiss. Because of its remoteness - that is, far from any military or police supervision - rough justice prevailed like in many other similar country townships. Class distinctions existed between the craftsmen and the bulk of peasant *burghers.*[47] It was exactly in oppressive situations like these where the poor turned to 'wild' justice, that Thomas Müntzer's theology of wrath emerged. The existing gap between the wealthy and the poor in Allstedt challenged him to consider whether God's children may become instruments of her/his wrath. Therefore, to appreciate Müntzer's 'Protestantism of the poor', the immediate context of his ministry is to be noted. In the light of this, Müntzer's theology is assessed.

On Easter Day 1523, says Eric Gritsch, the farmers and the miners went to church as usual, unaware that the new pastor of St. John's would descend on the town "like a thunderstorm on a peaceful Sunday afternoon."[48] Soon his irresistible prowess as a preacher began to draw people even from as far as twenty-five miles away, so that up to two thousand people would cram into his New Town church to witness the pulpit performances. The pastor in the Old Town, Simon Haferitz, was also impressed and started to demand a radical reform of ecclesiastical and social life.

Possibly the most significant change introduced by Müntzer in Allstedt, was his liturgical reforms. Though he had been a skilled Latinist himself, his prime concern was that the common people should be able to understand the service. Thus he wrote several church orders in German, his *Das Deutsche Kirchenamt* being the first order for divine service in the local vernacular produced by the Reformation. Van Dülmen points out that Müntzer had brought about drastic liturgical changes even before Luther did: "... weit vor Luther als erster der Reformatoren ... die Idee des allgemeinen Priestertums verwirklicht und die Landessprache in den Gottesdienst eingeführt."[51] The idea of the common priesthood of all was thus concretized in the liturgical experience of the people.

The subtitle of Müntzer's church order indicates that he had more in mind for his parishioners than their liturgical participation:

> "Instituted for the purposed of lifting the cunning cover that hid from the world the light now shining in these hymns of praise and divine psalms, for the edification of the steadily increasing Christendom according to God's immutable will, and for the destruction of the ostentatious gestures of the godless." [52]

A basic theological motif alluded to is the common priesthood of all pronounced by the reformers: it should be made real so that neither the Bible nor the activities of the priest is hidden from the lay people. Also, Müntzer refused to perceive a schism between *Gottesdienst* and social protest; between liturgical and political participation. Joyce Irwin analyzed Müntzer's liturgical use of Scripture. According to her it contained a definite social concern for the poor. His rendering of the psalms for example included the following:

> O Lord, leave the godless alone no longer,
> for their evil-doing with which they have
> raised themselves above others in worth
> hinders the whole world!
> - Ps. 140:8
>
> Grant not, O lord, the desires of the wicked;
> do not further his evil plot.
> - RSV

Read within context, his Psalm 48 concluded with a "highly subversive" stanza: "God alone is our Lord in eternity; He alone is our duke, under whose banner we shall fight unto death."[53]

During July 1523 Müntzer appealed for the last time to Luther, explaining his views. But the Wittenberg reformer remarked in a letter to Georg Spalatin, the court preacher of elector Frederick, dated 3 August 1523: "Thomas ... speaks in such absurd and unusual words and phrases, which are not found in Scripture, that you would think him crazy or drunk."[54] As Müntzer shaped his own theology, it put him irrevocably on a path different from Luther's. He also published a tract in which he warned that it was God and not humans, who, in his own time, would destroy the tyrants. To rebel was still inappropriate ("unfüglich"). None the less, his reading of the signs of the time forced him to announce that "those Last Days are upon us - when the elect will and must rise in righteous retaliation (sic) (*füglíche Empörung*) against the godless."[55] The landlord of Allstedt, count Ernst von Mansfield, was not impressed with the crowd-pulling services in St. John's Church, and he ordered the people to stop attending the "heretical services and sermons". Almost naturally the pastor of St. John's retorted in a letter: "You had better keep quiet. If you do not change your ways, I will deal with you a thousand times worse than Luther had

treated the Pope." It was signed "Thomas Müntzer, a Destroyer of the Ungodly."[56] As elector Frederick the Wise demanded an explanation, a reply was drafted on October 4. Even though he argued in that letter that "the sword will be taken from the rulers and given to the zealous people resulting in the fall of the godless", it should not yet be seen as a call to an armed struggle. At that time he did not acknowledge a conflictual situation between the rulers and the people. All he wanted to make clear to Frederick was that God's acts are not to be alienated from the realm of history and because of that the godless will not prevail. The elector did not want to be drawn into a slippery theological debate, and refused to arrest the preacher.[57]

Out of an interview with Spalatin ("more likely an interrogation", Scott argues) grew two more tracts which were printed around New Year 1524, titled *Von dem gedichteten Glauben* (On Counterfeit Faith) and the *Protestation oder Entbeitung* (Protestation or Proposition).[58] The difference between these and earlier treatises such as the "Prague Manifesto", is that Müntzer now directed his wrath against Luther whose theology he was beginning to reject openly. Moreover, he formed a secret military organisation to help him "defend the truth". Called the League of the Elect, its expressed aim was to drive out the ungodly.[59] The stage was set for Müntzer's theology of wrathfulness.

The first target of the League was the Mallerbach chapel just outside Allstedt. It contained a picture of the Virgin Mary which allegedly had miraculous power. The ecstatic demonstrations elicited

financial profits, administered by the nuns of nearby Naundorf. Müntzer wanted to "stop the blasphemy" and, in his presence, some League members burned the chapel after having warned the custodians. On the eve of Whitsun, May 14, the reformer celebrated their raid with a fiery sermon in which he allegedly ridiculed Frederick the Wise, calling him an incompetent, old grey-beard who does not understand the gospel and therefore does not deserve it. In fact, "Frederick has about as much wisdom in his head as I have in my behind."[60]

Still Müntzer was not arrested. Instead, the authorities decided they should personally hear the pastor of St. John's preach and arranged a trial sermon on 1 July 1524 in the Allstedt castle. Scott suggests that Müntzer insisted upon a hearing.[61] Whatever the case may be, in his *Fürstenpredigt* (Sermon of the Princes) the honourable dukes of Saxony were invited to accept and advance the revolutionary programme already being realized in Allstedt. This sermon must be taken as a final plea to the authorities to fight for God's cause, that is, as seen from Müntzer's perspective. Referring to himself, he preached: "A new Daniel must arise and interpret for you your vision and, as Moses teaches, he must lead. He must give the wrath of the people and of the princes the same direction.[62] Müntzerites in nearby Sangerhausen responded to these sentiments, but were then driven from their homes by Saxon mercenaries. At the height of the crisis Martin Luther wrote his open *Brief an die Fürsten zu Sachsen von dem aufrührischen Geist* (Letter to the Dukes of Saxony Concerning the restless Spirit), in which he denounced "that spirit of Allstedt" as a coward, traitor

and satanic agitator.[63] Müntzer's reaction was his *Hochverursachte Schutzrede*: "Highly Provoked Defence and Answer Against the Spiritless, Soft-living Flesh at Wittenberg, Which Has Befouled Pitiable Christianity in Perverted Fashion by Its Theft of Holy Scripture." In it Luther is denounced as "Dr Liar", "Cousin Sleplightly", "the chaste Babylonian virgin", "malicious raven", and other derogatory terms. This tract against Luther was confiscated and only one copy survived.[64]

On 1 August 1524 Thomas Müntzer was put on trial before the Weimar court. The hearing amounted to an irreversible political defeat: he was ordered to remove all his printing equipment from town, dismantle the League of the Elect, and stop his incendiary preaching.[65] Realizing that he would not be able to establish an alternative, non-Lutheran reformation in Allstedt, he left during the night of 7 August 1524, slipping over the town wall. As he fled towards the city of Mühlhausen, once again that harassed fugitive, he may have recalled his recent words of comfort to the imprisoned Müntzerites in Sangerhausen:

> A Prince, a landlord, is appointed to rule over temporal goods, and his power extends no further - but our souls he shall not rule, for in this matter we must obey God rather than men. The time is at hand - a great bloodshed will come upon the hardened world on account of their unfaith ... but God will not abandon his Elect - he will execute vengeance at the right time. [66]

The Great Peasants' War

Mühlhausen, one of the two imperial free cities in Thuringia, was destined to become a centre of the revolt. There, as Eric Gritsch describes it, the rich merchants were exploiting the masses "in the

best tradition of medieval capitalism", while "the city priests enjoyed as much independence and lack of supervision as the oligarchical councilmen." Mühlhausen was therefore "ripe for social and political upheaval."[67] A former monk, Heinrich Schwertfeger (called Pfeiffer), had already begun a public attempt to bring about religious and social change.[68] Before Müntzer's arrival around 15 August 1524, the city council had been informed about him by Luther as "the tree bearing no other fruit than murder, rebellion, and bloodshed."[69]

On street corners, in private homes, and in sermons, Müntzer and Pfeiffer called upon the Mühlhauseners to demand new constitutional reforms. These efforts led to the documentation of the so-called Eleven Articles, insisting on the removal of the present city government and the administration of justice based upon Scriptures as the word of God. Unfortunately the document did not bring the peasants' hardships to the fore, so that they refused to join the struggle in the city. After a demonstration by an angry crowd headed by Müntzer and Pfeiffer, both were banished from Mühlhausen in September 1524.[70] While again being reduced to the precarious position of a wandering priest (*Wanderprediger*), Müntzer completed his last tract against Luther. At the start of 1525 he returned to the city and popular demand ascertained his rectorship of the largest church, the St. Mary's, without the consent of the council. A major reason for the transformation was Pfeiffer, who had already returned in December 1524, to create a revolutionary tension in Mühlhausen.

Whilst Müntzer was not the initiator of the Thuringian revolt, he did keep in touch with the warring peasants who were moving south towards the city. In anticipation he designed a flag emblazoned with the battle cry: *verbum domini manet in aeternum*! (The word of God endures forever). By the end of April the insurrection was sweeping through the countryside of central Germany. Yet, as Hans-Jürgen Goertz reminds us, the motto was "violence against things, rather than against people."[71] When the unrest broke out near Mühlhausen, the reformer wrote an urgent letter to the miners of Allstedt who had been the first to support his paramilitary League of the Elect:

> The pure fear of God be with you, brothers. What are you still sleeping for; why have you not recognized the will of God? Ah, how often have I told you that God can only reveal himself in this way ... Even if you are only three who trust in God, seek only His name and honour and you will not fear a hundred-thousand. Attack, Attack, Attack! The time has come. The evildoers are cowed like dogs. Pay no attention to the misery of the godless. Indeed they will humbly plead and snivel and implore you like children. Show no mercy, remember what God demanded in Deuteronomy 7 ... We must sleep no longer. Attack, Attack, while the fire is hot! [72]

Luther, on the other hand, trying to promote peace on a preaching tour and stop rebellion (an effort that failed), then published his "Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants" on May 6. Arguing that the rebellion threatened to abolish the order of the state which was ordained by God for the prevention of evil through the use of the Sword, he recommended:

> Let everyone who can, smite, slay, and stab, secretly or openly, remembering that nothing can be more poisonous, hurtful, or devilish than a rebel. It is just as when one must kill a mad dog; if you do not strike him, he will strike you, and a whole land with you. [73]

Early in May 1525, approximately seven thousand rebels, including

some Allstedt miners who had responded to Müntzer's letter, gathered near Frankenhausen. Müntzer, who had formed another paramilitary Eternal League of God, wrote his old enemy, count Ernst von Mansfeld:

> ... that for the sake of the name of the living God you desist from your tyrannical raging lest you continue to incite God's wrath over you. You have dared to suppress the Christians. Tell me, you miserable bag of worms, who made you a ruler of the people whom God has purchased with his precious blood? [74]

Punctuating this view, he ordered the execution of three servants employed by Ernst who had been captured as spies. He also poured out his anger on Ernst's brother, the Protestant count Albrecht: "Couldn't you find in your Lutheran pudding and your Wittenberg soup what Ezekiel has prophesied ... that God instructs all the birds of the heavens to consume the flesh of the princes?" [75] However, the combined forces of landgrave Philipp, count Ernst and duke George surrounded the rebels at the Schlachtberg and Philipp demanded that "the false prophet" be turned over. The warrior-priest refused to comply, and assured the peasants, instead, that God would not abandon his elect. As a consequence the inadequately armed peasants were mowed down by the Frankenhausen army. "The Peasants' War in central Germany had floundered in a bloody rout." [76] Müntzer was captured, then tortured until he 'recanted' on May 17, admitting that God-ordained governmental authority should be obeyed. Heinrich Pfeiffer had also been detained and on 27 May 1525, the two revolutionary priests were taken out into the field for execution at Gormar. In James Atkinson's view the victory of the princes became "an inglorious tale of merciless revenge." [77]

Müntzer's "Protestantism of the Poor" in Retrospect

Evaluating the various scholarly definitions of this specific form of Protestant Reformation from a black South African perspective, I find none of them entirely satisfactory. While acknowledging that especially the concept of the "Radical Reformation" (GH Williams') is firmly wedged into Western academia, it must be conceded that 'radical' is a much misused term in black political circles. Because individuals and organisations have tended to 'out-radicalize' one another, its usage is problematic. Moreover, even if Müntzer's stance undoubtedly must be considered as being radical in terms of political action, some regard - with plausible arguments - his theo-political theory as not radical at all. This contradiction and split evaluation, with both Müntzer and Luther being both radical and conservative, necessarily creates tension among scholars, leading to incessant debates.[78] My contention is that the validity of Müntzer's retributive option within the South African context should not be hampered by internal ideological connotations. Ronald Bainton's "The Left Wing of the Reformation" (also J McNeil and H Fast) sounds more acceptable, but the annexation of the term 'left' by white liberal politicians in turn, renders it an ambiguous concept.

The Marxist "People's Reformation" has tremendous appeal for oppressed people, for an interpretation illuminating the socio-economic dimension in Müntzer's thought, is pivotal in a context of oppression. However, the underrating of Müntzer's theological argument in traditional Marxist circles generates problems. While most modern Marxist historians would disagree with Engels' depiction of

the reformer as a near-atheist and fully recognize the theological content of his work, they have difficulty with theology as such. Max Steinmetz for example argues that it was precisely theological commitment that had limited Müntzer. For him God, in the final analysis, remained the determining factor. "Ideologically Müntzer was shipwrecked upon theology, a worldview unsuited to the process of emancipation, the liberation of the people by their own efforts."[79] After spelling out Müntzer's "daring objective to establish a classless society", Wulf Trende concludes that it failed because the boundless trust in divine intervention obstructed a realistic perception; that God would establish an egalitarian Kingdom was a historical impossibility ("grenzenlosen Vertrauen auf die gerechte Sache Gottes ... der Blick auf die historische Unmöglichkeit seines Unterfangens verstellt").[80]

The black Christian experience of theology in South Africa is different. In their oppression they have discovered that belief in God need not be an obstruction to the liberation struggle. On the contrary, it can be "a vehicle for liberation".[81] My suggestion is that in order to avoid the above-mentioned hermeneutical difficulties, "The Alternative Reformation" be employed to describe Müntzer's reformation, for that is exactly what he and even the pacifist non-conformists sought to promote.

This said, the purpose now is to locate the motif of vengeance in Müntzer's alternative theology. Friedrich Engels correctly identifies the clear and simple goal the peasants and plebeians had in mind with their war: they believed that the day had come in which

to wreak vengeance on all their oppressors.[82] This vindictive desire had grown out of their experience of suffering and an almost daily expectation of disaster. The following saying expressed their desolation:

> He who does not die in 1523,
> in 1524 does not drown,
> And is not beaten to death in 1525
> Can truly claim miracles in his life. [83]

The question is to what extent and at which level did Müntzer share these convictions, for he himself had not been a poor peasant. Although it does not look relevant at first, Eric Gritsch's elucidation of the reformer's view on the authority of the "inner word", must be taken into consideration. All human beings possessed a kernel of faith, implanted (and to be awakened) by the Spirit long before Scripture was written. It therefore follows that the Bible could no longer be authoritative alone; believer and Bible were equally authoritative. Here Nikolaus Storch's influence which held within itself an insistence upon 'the direct revelation through visions and dreams', is obvious. These religious ideas were marked by chiliasm, a drastic eschatology and a communistic ideal: nobody would be oppressed any longer by any government or king.[84] What then, is the use of the Bible, the "outer word"? Its main purpose is to maintain the importance of God's Law as it leads the sinner into the darkness of the suffering of the earned punishment. That is the only way the believer can be sure of God's election, that he or she indeed has received the Holy Spirit - through suffering. Human beings must become inwardly empty; must recognize in a "terrible amazement" (*Verwundering*) their fear of God's punishment and must flee the creatureliness in the depth of the soul (*Seelengrund*) until they are "overshadowed by the Holy Spirit". Only then will

they be ready to fulfil the work of God by becoming his/her instrument.

Here the concept of the "inner word" functions as the theological basis of Müntzer's revolutionary programme: "Whoever flees from the inner punishment of the law of God ... must suffer the punishment outwardly." The elect's task is to carry out the will of the wrathful God by punishing the godless. His own inward and outward suffering as a fugitive affirmed his belief that it was a sign of election and the foundation of his new life as a revolutionary prophet.[85]

Andrew Drummond focuses on the "fear of God" concept that Müntzer posited as a precondition for salvation. As a medieval mystic concept it denoted the beginning of doubt, despair, rejection of the worldly view of religion and the established order of things. It was only gradually that Müntzer put his own stamp on it: the principle of fear became outspokenly social, namely, the idea of "the fear of Man". When he founded the paramilitary League as a further step toward revolution, it was based on a two-fold principle: recognition and fear of God alone was the first human step to true salvation. This implied a refusal to accept the existing wicked society created by the ungodly. The fear of God also meant the loss of any "fear of Man"; a faith that is tested in its attempt to change society. During the Thuringian uprising of 1525 Thomas Müntzer's doctrine of fear became a pertinent feature of his theology of wrath.[86]

Increasingly Christ's Godforsaken desolation on the cross became the paradigm for the elect. In opposition to the Wittenberger's doctrine of justification by faith-alone and the Word-alone (*sola fides, sola scriptura*) and not by works, Müntzer maintained that the soul can only be purged through the bitterness of Godforsaken desolation. People come to faith not through the 'honey-sweet Christ', but through 'the bitter Christ' of Gethsemané and the Cross "to whom we must become conformed, in the heart-felt groaning and yearning to follow God's will."[87] As John Oyer sums it up: for Müntzer Christ required a discipleship (*Nachfolge*) in the sense that one simply must experience the suffering of Christ on the Cross. The faith-alone doctrine (a cornerstone in Protestant theology) was regarded as a half-truth, and therefore a "false faith".[88] His *theologia crucis* was thus rooted in mysticism-spiritualism, which ultimately led him to a different political position than Luther's.

Norman Cohn's exposé of millennial movements during the later Middle Ages, is illuminating with respect to locating Müntzer's position within a wider framework. Those chiliasts shared a vision of a world that would be totally new, and they explored several ways to secure it. The Millennium envisaged could assume a purely ethereal spirituality or even a most materialist ideal - realities that would be reached by violent or pacifist means. Frequently the economic aspirations informed apocalypticism, especially when the oppressed masses were captured by the imagination of a millennial prophet. At the time of Müntzer, chiliastic movements collectively known as the *Bundschuh* (meaning a peasant's clog), reasserted the

ancient Taborite idea that after the last bloody battle against the evil powers of Antichrist, perfect justice would prevail on earth. Although there were many other peasant risings in southern Germany, only the *Budschuh* aimed at the Millennium.

> ...it's object was nothing less than a social revolution of the most thorough-going kind. All authority was to be overthrown, all dues and taxes abolished, all ecclesiastical property distributed amongst the people, and all woods, waters and pastures were to become communal property. [29]

What attracted Müntzer to these Taborite doctrines, intimated to him by Nikolaus Storch, was the war of extermination which the righteous were to wage against the unrighteous. The difference lays in his claim that he had become a paracletic being. Müntzer even speaks of himself as 'being God'. The establishment of the Millennium was a divinely approved eschatological mission. He further believed that he was in a special position to discharge that mission, for he was endowed "with perfect insight into the divine will and living in perfect conformity with it."[30] When he rendered his "Sermon before the Princes" (*Fürstenpredigt*), he still hoped to attract their interest in the inauguration of the Millennium, but their reluctance meant trusting the poor themselves. They, the Elect, must now be willing to exterminate any member of the ruling class who hinders the egalitarian goal. Cohn holds that Müntzer was not so much interested in the ameliorating of the peasantry's lot as subjecting their revolt to his mystical-spiritualist programme. "Müntzer was a *propheta* obsessed by eschatological phantasies which he attempted to translate into reality by exploiting social discontent."[31] He must therefore be typified as a prophet of the egalitarian Millennium.

For Martin Luther an armed revolt seemed irrelevant, as the primary enemy was the Papacy and it was by the dissemination of the true Gospel that the Antichrist would be overcome. Müntzer, on the other hand, regarded the civil powers to be "the origin of all theft ... the seedgrounds of usury and theft and robbery."[92] This resolved in an intense belief that God's Day of Judgment (*Urteil*), the Day of Vengeance, was at hand. Gradually this Alternative Reformer resolved that he himself should gather the Church of the Last Days. The apocalyptic content of Müntzer's thought cannot be minimized. "He wanted", James Stayer says, "to wield a sharp sickle against the tares in God's acre so that the good grain could be harvested."[93] If the elect (the good grain) would rise in a righteous spirit of resentment ("Fügliche Empörung") against the godless (the tares), they will inaugurate the end of the world (the harvest).

At this point it becomes necessary to briefly explicate Luther's view. The latter struggled with the idea of "God's wrath" with such an intensity that he experienced the encounter as *Anfechtung* (a severe torment of the inner spirit and conscience). However, while Müntzer rooted his theology of the cross (*theologia crucis*) in mysticism-spiritualism, Luther transcended it. Rejecting every form of works righteousness, the Wittenberger defined God's grace as free grace, not conditioned by human accomplishments. We became righteous, that is, right before God (*coram Deo*), by grace alone, through faith alone, by the will of Christ alone.[94] Not only does the Christian life fall under the dark but salvific shadow of Christ's cross, but theology in its entirety. The centrality of

the cross determines the method and content of theology. While a theology of glory (*theologia gloriae*) concerns itself too with the search of a gracious God, its meritorious nature wrongly stresses a direct human route to God. The actual state of affairs is revealed at the cross, where the human being is identified as a sinner *coram Deo*. The cross, however, appears to reveal weakness and powerlessness and is thus God's "alien work" (*opus alienum*), a disguised revelation. Faith sees beyond that contrary image (*sub contraria specie*) the most powerful disclosure of divine love, which is God's "proper work" (*opus proprium*). Therefore, faith can be defined as a continual movement via *Anfechtungen*, permeating through the wrath and judgment of God, in order to discover the divine grace again and again.[99]

As Martin Luther, Thomas Müntzer also embraced a *theologia crucis*, which made them both critical of the abuses by the secular and ecclessiastical powers of the time. But whereas Müntzer sought to become God's destroyer of the wicked, Luther was committed to his 'grace alone' and 'faith alone' doctrine. The implication being that while Luther rejected any achievement-oriented religion, for Müntzer God's wrath would be appeased only via revolutionary involvement in the Great Peasants' War as an instrument of divine wrath. Grappling with the question whether Müntzer was primarily a theologian or a revolutionary, Lowell Zuck holds that the chief mission of his League of the Elect should be kept in mind: they aimed at control of the church and the domination of worldly society. This violent, revolutionary position arose from the conviction that the immediate duty of the elect was to extirpate the ungodly

as they were the last remaining barrier to the realization of God's reign. The Alternative Reformer was also sure that any possible improvement of the oppressive situation of God's children, any reflection of the divine and perfect Kingdom, could only occur within the lives of human beings, in their concrete, earthly situations of hope and despair. Zuck, citing Karl Mannheim, observes that Müntzer "exemplified all the vitality, ecstasy and vindictiveness" of society's oppressed masses.[96]

Even though modern Lutheran scholars such as Hillerbrand and van Dülmen acknowledge the social-political dimension of Müntzer's theology of the cross, they insist that it did not outweigh his theological concerns.[97] Basically in agreement with them but less certain, is Oyer who admits: "It is difficult to tell whether it was religious or social ideas that were uppermost in driving Müntzer to embrace a theory of revolution."[98] In an elaboration on Müntzer's theological basis for revolution, Goertz shows that the two elements were closely held in a dialectical balance.[99] In a later publication he refashioned a Satrean saying and settled for an inclusive description: Müntzer was a "theologian and revolutionary, a single whole."[100] This depiction is acceptable, as the image of a sixteenth-century warrior-priest present no cognitive problem for modern Third World Christians who remember, among others, a Ché Guevara or a Camillo Torres.

It is impossible to finalize our ethical critique of the 'warrior-priestly' stance of Müntzer without returning to Martin Luther, for the major writings of the former were attacks on Wittenberg theolo-

gy. An extract from one of Luther's letters, written in February 1524, may provide a better understanding of his way of thinking, although it was not concerned with the Müntzerites, but with the Catholic authorities:

> It would be a worldly consolidation and altogether profitless, nay hurtful to your souls, if I were to console you ... with the thought that by rebukes and complaints we would take revenge for the outrages and the wickedness of these blasphemers. Even though we were to kill them all or drive them all out by force, or if we were to rejoice in the punishment that someone else would mete out to them because of our sufferings, that would do no good ... What sort of consolation is it? Is there any hope in it? Is there any patience in it? Is there any Scripture in it? In place of God they have put violence; in place of patience they have shown vengefulness. It is not of God, and, therefore, it must certainly be of the devil ... Dear friends, you have no reason to desire revenge or to wish evil to your enemies, but you ought rather pity them from your hearts. [101]

These words are part and parcel of a carefully constructed political theory: the two-kingdom doctrine (*Zwei-Reiche Lehre*). Luther hated the Constantinian synthesis of worldly and spiritual powers as much as Müntzer did. But in lieu of a forceful inauguration of God's Day of Vengeance, he designed a different resolution: the two must be separated although related. The princes alone (*obrigkeit*) have the right to wield the Sword, whereas the Church must confine itself to spiritual matters. Lloyd Volkmar, explicating Luther's views, claims that the Church's prophetic role is hereby not given up, but the equiparation of religion with social, economic and political goals means that the two kingdoms are "hopelessly muddled". This results in the confusion of the gospel of heavenly righteousness with the law, which deals with earthly justice.

> Moreover, it was an arrogant usurpation of divine prerogatives and powers. It was not the proper role of a minister, or prophet, to be the instrument of divine wrath and vengeance, let alone to permit the saints to take up the sword. God placed the sword of His power and justice in the hand of the magistrate. He alone was duly called and commissioned to punish the wicked and protect the upright. [102]

Volkmar concludes that great issues were at stake - the cause of the gospel itself, as well as its interpretation and proper application. That is why Luther's call on the authorities to cut down the revolting peasants, must be seen in the light of the consistent principle of the two kingdoms. He then offers a near incomprehensible justification: "If viewed from the perspective of Luther's understanding of this principle, the harshness of the harsh document is not pitilessness, but only mercy."[103] Robert Crossly, not denying the sincerity of these theological commitments, nevertheless makes clear the logical outcome of such a construction: Luther did condemn the brutality the secular rulers perpetrated against the lower classes. The latter, though, were not given the right to challenge injustice. "They have no right to rise against lawfully constituted authority. They must be patient. They must submit to tyranny if that is the case."[104]

The Lutheran two-kingdom principle evoked Karl Barth's chagrin four hundred years later, which, in his view, constituted a serious moral lapse. In the wake of nazified German Christendom, the Swiss theologian charged German Lutheranism with social ethical bankruptcy in an open letter to the French Protestants in 1939: "The German people suffer from the heritage of the greatest German Christian, from the error of Martin Luther ... Hitlerism is the present

evil dream of the German pagan who first became Christianized in a Lutheran form." [105]

Apart from the fact that the *Deutsche Christen* misinterpreted Luther, Barth's criticism - valuable in itself - must not result in a loss of perspective. The two-kingdom doctrine at least ensured the eradication of the existing parochial-territorial-national *corpus Christianum*, whereas Müntzer came up with a kind of totalitarian, theocratic world-structure. Carter Lindberg suggests that he had actually intensified the medieval conception, and was in this respect even more conservative than Luther.[106]

Some scholars view the Lutheran *Zwei-Reiche Lehre* in a more positive light, stressing the interrelatedness of the two kingdoms. It is argued that Luther advocated the "natural" ordering of society under a legitimate government. This does not mean that he did not criticize the rulers, as his participation in the political realm shows, but he could not endorse Müntzer's rebellious effort. Luther's understanding of his *Sitz im Leben* was affected by (1) his own social position and (2) his theological view of the secular authority's function. Ultimately the Wittenberger purposed to show that the "secular forces of chaos" in fact needed to be brought under the authority of a Christian political hierarchy.

> A balanced understanding of Luther's two kingdoms doctrine suggests that the "spiritual kingdom" (which is the concern of the church) and the "temporal kingdom" (which is the concern of the civil authorities) are both manifestations of the "kingdom of Christ" over against the "kingdom of the devil." Luther's point, however, was that the temporal and the spiritual realms were to be responded to in different ways. [107]

According to Bauman, Luther holds that God rules the world in two

different ways by two different means. The accent is therefore not on the separation of two kingdoms (which should be distinguished), but on two different "modes of divine rule" (*Herrschaftsweisen Gottes*). Luther interprets the purpose and function of the divine institution of government (*Obrigkeit*) as a means of grace, because it is a necessary condition of life (*lebensnotwendig*) and because of sin. As a means of grace and as an act of mercy God has established three primary institutions (state, family, and church) in order to maintain the world against chaos. There is therefore no area or realm of life and history where God is not actively involved. It is clear that Luther's "politics of reason" thus constitutes a direct opposite of Müntzer's theology of wrathfulness. In his eyes Müntzer was a facilitator and prophet of chaos, undermining God's *Schöpfungs-ordenungen* (divine institutions).

> This implies practically that the Christian's function within the world is not to sacralize (or Christianize) the secular or natural worldly order, but to acknowledge it as God's good *Schöpfungs-* or *Erhaltungsordnung* and to accept his station and calling (*Beruf*) within it as the place of his sanctification (*Heiligung*) and his obedient service to God and fellowman (sic). [108]

Despite being a prophet of the egalitarian Millennium, Thomas Müntzer neither challenged the fusion of worldly and spiritual authority seriously, nor propagated a separation between Church and State. In the final analysis, he perpetuated the Constantinian pattern. Forell captures the essence of this late medieval enigma who never founded a church, yet still manages to affect great religious and ideological movements: "Müntzer was a crusader born out of due time, a sincere God-fearing inquisitor, eager to kill the godless to vindicate God's truth, neither hero nor villain but unable and unwilling to wait upon God."[109]

Conclusion

At the outset of the Lutheran Reformation Thomas Müntzer found himself attracted to it, especially by the affirmation of 'the common priesthood of all'. The notion crystallized into his pioneering translation of the church orders in the local vernacular. At this early stage Müntzer's focus was on the common people's experience of religious tyranny, hence his frequent iconoclastic attacks on its symbols. He became convinced that "the godless rulers should be killed, especially the priests and monks who revile the gospel as heresy for us ..."[110] A call was therefore made on the civil authorities to destroy the godless, an invitation that was rejected. The refusal contributed to Müntzer's dialectical understanding of the authority of the state. He agreed with Luther that the Sword was given to the worldly rulers as he had explained in his "Sermon Before the Princes" (Allstedt, 1524). It was ordained by God to protect the good and punish the evil (Romans 13:3-4), and as such the necessary means "to wipe out the ungodly." The retribution of the wicked means the protection of the pious. The princes are therefore the servants of the Sword, but if they are unwilling to perform God's judgment, it "will be taken away from them (Dan 2:26f)."[111]

Earlier in Prague, he had wrongly prophesied the coming of God's Day of Vengeance (that is, when the Turks would arrive and take over Bohemia). But he was convinced that the signs of the time were unmistakable in the Great Peasants' War. Just as God judged the shepherds who forgot their duty, so was the League of the Elect to judge and punish with the sword, the failure of the church but

mainly the state to fulfil God's law. Once this evil structure was destroyed, the League would divide the property and goods among its members thus erecting the kingdom of God on earth. These ideas later influenced that faction of Anabaptists who actually established their 'kingdom' in Munster (early 1530s), bent on the idea of revenge as divine punishment.[112]

Müntzer's fundamental flaw in his theological construct was that his initial distinction between the "inner word" (as the experiencing of the Holy Spirit) and the "outer word" (the Scriptural witnessing to that experience) progressively diminished as the Peasants' War developed. Especially during the Thuringian revolt his self-perceived role as God's "Destroyer of the ungodly" acquired an authoritarian aura relating to matters of faith, life and destruction. What emerged finally was a complete equation of divine vengeance with his own vindictive desires. This assumed spiritual authority rendered the critical authority of the outer word obsolete. As one of God's elect he was more than willing to "join God" in the process of executing those who opposed God's will.[113]

At three levels Müntzer's stance poses theological ethical challenges to black South Africans:

1. The communal trait of his 'Protestantism of the poor'. It is difficult to determine the depth of Müntzer's social concern for the poor, that is, in terms of the improvement of their conditions. His personal mystic experiencing of the "bitter Christ" in the depth of the soul (the essence of his *theologia*

crucis), was not shared by the peasants involved in the war. But it must be conceded that these *Anfechtungen* did not mean an acceptance of the status quo. Militant egalitarianism constituted the apex of his career. Though Müntzer failed to liberate the peasants from serfdom, economic equality was the basic value he wanted to project - an ideal exploited people cannot renounce. An 'ethic of vengeance' in South Africa at this level means the demolition of the hegemony of white socio-economic privileges. Positively stated, it has to do with the pursuit of political liberation and economic egalitarianism.

2. His dialectical interpretation of Romans 13 poses a particular alternative for politically oppressed people. The issue raised here is whether God's children, under certain circumstances, have the right to annex the "sword" of civil authorities, namely, their legitimate use of power. In Müntzer's view tyrants not only lose the right to govern, but the oppressed must wrest that sword by force, fulfilling a divine instruction. He perceived the *Bauernkrieg* as proof that the poor became God's avengers to arrest the tyranny of the state. Theologically the question arises whether or not the black resistance movements can claim this position, especially in the light of military strategies employed during the 'Constantinian' apartheid era. The continuing violence since February 2, 1990, in turn suggests that this question is likely to have relevance for some time to come. This possibility is explored in the final chapter.

3. Thomas Müntzer stressed that the tyrant must be justly punished. In reality, however, his history illustrates the 'janus face' of human vengeance, or, put differently, both its constructive and negative dimensions. Because he saw no schism between religious faith and political action, retribution was primarily a theological priority. Unfortunately, the valid theo-political idea of the punishment of the ungodly dominated to such an extent that it changed into revenge (of which the execution of count Ernst's servants is an example). Also, he deviated from the humanitarian objective: property, rather than people should be destroyed - better still (we might say), redistributed. Müntzer's perversion of the principle of retributive justice, however, does not vitiate its legitimacy, and the question as to how historical and ongoing injustices should be avenged, also requires our attention.

CHAPTER 5

THE MESSENGER OF BAD NEWS - MALCOLM X.

> The civilization of which America insists on measuring us and to which we must conform our natural tastes and inclinations, is the daughter of that European civilization which is now rushing furiously to its doom ... Behind all this gloss of culture and wealth and religion has been lurking the world-old lust for bloodshed and power gained at the cost of honor.
>
> - W.E.B. Du Bois, 1916

> The white man's Christian religion further deceived and brainwashed this 'Negro' to always turn the other cheek, and grin, and scrape, and bow, and be humble, and to sing, and to pray, and to take whatever was dished out by the devilish white man; and to look for his pie in the sky, and for his heaven in the hereafter, while right here on earth the slave-master white man enjoyed *his* heaven.
>
> - Malcolm X

Hypotheses

1. Malcolm X's ethic of vengeance, having emerged out of his lived experience, needs (as was the case in chapters 3 and 4) to be historically and contextually discerned.

2. It is possible that at the early stages of his career as a religious leader and political activist, Malcolm X harboured racist ideas regarding white people. This tendency was basically due to two factors: Firstly, it was partly a consequence of negative childhood experiences and secondly, but more profoundly, it was consonant with specific 'Black Muslim' teachings. The anger of Malcolm X, on the other hand, cannot simply be equated with racial hatred.

3. During the first phase of his career (1952-1964), the idea of

territorial separation was a crucial dimension of Malcolm's theology. He asserted that the salvation of blacks depended on their readiness to physically separate themselves from the "white devil-race", whose imminent and historical judgment by Allah was unavoidable. Besides its theological thrust, separation also contained a demand for economic justice. The United States government needed to compensate blacks who have suffered "400 years of inhuman treatment" in America. Here vengeance crystallizes into the concept of reparation. In his last years Malcolm dropped the notions of returning to Africa and the creation of a separate black state, but he stayed committed to the demand for compensation and the ideology of racial separation or black independence (as opposed to integration).

4. The personal development of Malcolm X, both in terms of theological and political vision, has to be acknowledged. This progress is mirrored by his growing disagreement with the fundamental doctrines of Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam. Increasingly the apolitical and passive reliance on divine acts of retribution was questioned and held in abeyance. In its stead retaliatory violence, viewed as self-defence, emerged as a viable option.

5. Malcolm's reverence for the religion of Islam means that ultimately his 'ethic of vengeance' must be tested against orthodox Islamic principles.

Introductory Remarks

It would not be an exaggeration to state that Malcolm Little, who later would become internationally known as Malcolm X, is still one of the most controversial figures in the United States although he had already been assassinated in 1965. Neither should his prevailing influence upon the on-going shaping of African-Americanism be underrated. At the height of his career he represented to the majority of white Americans the incarnation of violence and racial hatred, but the masses of the ghetto hailed him as their "living black manhood".[1] His provocative utterances and boldness called forth decisive responses of acceptance or rejection and that, more than anything else, resulted in his untimely death as a martyr. Malcolm had an immediate impact on the proponents of Black Power like Stokely Carmichael and Eldridge Cleaver in the late Sixties. Today his words and the complex development of his thought are not only subjected to many academic discussions, but used, sung about and reflected upon by a new generation of street poets and young "rappers".[2] It is evident that Malcolm X is re-emerging as a symbol of black liberation in the USA. In our effort to unravel his stance on vengeance, three phases should be discerned, although they cannot be regarded as historically watertight units: 1. His childhood and youthful experiences until his imprisonment; 2. His conversion to the Black Muslim faith and the work within the Nation of Islam, and 3. His discovery of orthodox Islam and pan-Africanism.

The Hustler

The primary source for particulars on Malcolm's life story remains his autobiography as he told it to Alex Haley. Others like Louis

Lomax, Peter Goldman, Henry Young, Robert Brisbane and James Cone have also contributed to the sources at our disposal.

It is clear that the making of his personality began at an early stage. Especially the racial consciousness of his father, the Reverend Earl Little, left a lasting impression on Malcolm. Earl Little had tried to make a living in a time when negative social forces operated in the Deep South at a frightening scale. The violent, white-sheeted Ku Klux Klan (KKK) had been reborn in 1915 - a development that accelerated the growth of racial bigotry and intolerance in America. Little became but one victim of these vigilantes who were determined to make the United States a white man's country. In 1924 the sociologist John Moffatt Mecklin published a study on the KKK, dissecting the mentality of its adherence and its organisation. Its "fulfilment of one hundred percent Americanism" (which meant being white, native born and Protestant) became a condition against which blacks, Roman Catholics, Jews, Orientals and all foreigners were measured. The African-American was considered an alien and unassimilable element in society and therefore expected to accept a subordinate position. The Klan, which is actually "a refuge for mediocre men, if not for weaklings", Mecklin claims, capitalized on the whites' fear of the new ambitions of black people in the aftermath of the Civil War that ended slavery in the mid-nineteenth century. "As a nation we had cultivated a taste for the cruel, the brutal, the intolerant, and the un-Christian that demanded gratification."[3]

The survey of Richard M. Brown goes further back in history and it

lays bare the patterns of American violence. Besides lawless vigilantism, lynch-mob violence became a common societal feature in the postwar era (down to World War I) and in this era it was pre-eminently directed against the Southern black people. From 1882 to 1903 alone a total of 1 985 blacks were killed by Southern lynch mobs. In contrast to this regional activity, the second KKK organized itself on a national basis so that it became a perennial factor in the last hundred years of American violence. Psychologically it can be viewed as "major aggressive attempts" by white people to maintain Caucasian supremacy. The argument that lynching was a tool of punishment against black murderers and rapists is unconvincing, as mere white perception of black aggressiveness triggered off violent reprisal, namely, hanging or burning alive. Numerous pogrom-style riots in which blacks were freely assaulted, broke out basically because of resentment at black self-assertion. "The underlying causes of these riots", Brown explains, "were white fears of social amalgamation with blacks, distrust of black education, dislike of black efforts and self-improvement, and hatred of abolitionism."[4]

In that climate of visceral animosity Earl Little, who did freelance preaching in local black Baptist churches, developed a gospel which was a mixture of Christianity and Garveyism.[5] As the philosophy of Garvey had a decisive influence on Malcolm in his formative years, instilled by his father, it is proper that a closer look is taken at it.

Marcus Moziah Garvey (1887-1940), a Jamaican by birth, established

in Kingston in 1914 the Universal Negro Improvement Association And African Communities League (UNIA), but it failed to gain momentum in Jamaica. After touring the United States in 1916, he moved his headquarters to Harlem and the organization rapidly grew in the years 1919 to 1921.[6] Garvey correctly observed that slavery alienated blacks from their African culture and tore down their national and personal self-respect. Racial pride and African nationalism were thus inextricably woven together and the whole programme of the UNIA was based on these two complimentary objectives.[7] Although Garvey had not been the first to advocate a policy of "back-to-Africa", and despite Du Bois' criticism that Garveyism was "too bombastic and impractical", no one before him could reach and capture the imagination of the urbanized, working masses.[8]

Marcus Garvey was what is known in African-American folklore, a "race-man". M.H. Boulware, who analysed the nature and style of his oratory, noted that he dramatized, glorified and praised black skins: "The black man need his own government, with his own president in the Black House and a Black God in Heaven."[9] Garvey regularly spelled out his religio-philosophy in a widely read newspaper, *Negro World*, and a monthly magazine, the *Black Man*:

> The white man universally has lost control of himself in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man (sic). The white man is about to destroy himself through race selfishness and race prejudice. That selfishness and that prejudice will exist as long as the white man exclusively is in power - as long as he remains in political power, in military power, in industrial power, in social power, in economic power - there will be no solving of the problem of prejudice between races. But the moment all races stand on the same platform of political, social, economic and military equality, that hour the great problem will be solved. [10]

The Rev Earl Little became an ardent preacher of Garveyism and because of this had been continuously harassed by white vigilante groups. One night, when Malcolm's mother was still pregnant with him, hooded members of the KKK surrounded their home, shouting threats. Earl, who had been away on a preaching mission in Milwaukee, was angry with frustration but he knew, yet again, they would have to move. After Malcolm's birth (on May 9 1925, in Omaha, Nebraska) the family eventually settled in Lansing, Michigan, where his father planned to open a small business. Earl continued with the organizing of Garveyite meetings in people's homes and he sometimes took the young Malcolm along with him. The white establishment of Lansing soon discovered that he "spread trouble among the good niggers."[11] Malcolm recalls in his autobiography his "earliest vivid memory" was that during a "nightmare night" in 1929, their house was burned down around them.

Two years thereafter Earl Little allegedly suffered death at the hands of white vigilantes, who called themselves the Black Legion. The family life began to deteriorate and disintegrate.[12] Poverty struck and the young Malcolm turned to petty crime. In 1937 his mother, Louise, was committed to a state mental hospital and the seven children scattered among different homes. That these self-annihilating childhood experiences had a cumulative effect, is evident from his autobiography:

> I truly believe that if ever a state social agency destroyed a family, it destroyed ours ... I knew I wouldn't be back to see my mother again because it could make me a very vicious and dangerous person - knowing they had looked at us as numbers and as a case in their book, not as human beings. And knowing that my mother in there was a statistic that didn't have to be, that existed because of a society's

> failure, hypocrisy, greed and lack of mercy and compassion. Hence I have no mercy or compassion in me for a society that will crush people and then penalize them for not being able to stand up under the weight. [13]

The impact of the culture of black consciousness in Malcolm's formative years also needs to be recognized. In June 1937, for example, Joe Louis became the heavyweight boxing champion of the world. For blacks, Lawrence Levine maintains, this was not just another sports event. Immediately Louis was enshrined as a culture hero and every victory was seen in symbolic terms: "He beat representatives of the dominant group to their knees". For the tens of thousands of blacks who celebrated those victories with parading, singing and dancing, it was "... a collective victory of the race."[14] It filled Malcolm with racial pride, but somehow it also contributed to his behaving badly at the integrated school he attended. He was suspended, sent to reform school and placed in the care of white Christian people. In retrospect Malcolm perceived their kindness as a form of condescension, saying they liked him as one would "a mascot".[15] They arranged for Malcolm, now a tall and intelligent adolescent, to enter the white Mason Junior High where he - being "the popular nigger" - became president of his seventh grade class.

Louis Lomax points out that it was at this stage that two specific occurrences affected changes in Malcolm's life. The first happened when his half-sister, Ella Mae Collins from Boston, visited the Little brothers and sisters in Lansing. She was a proud, commanding woman with a powerful personality and her visit not only resulted in a family reunion, but also an invitation for Malcolm to spend the summer of 1940 in Boston. There he saw, for the first

time in his life, blacks living in decent homes and this impressed him in such a way that it filled him with "a restlessness with being around white people".[16] Back at Mason Junior High he then revealed his ambition to the faculty advisor - that of becoming a lawyer. The advisor kindly responded, notwithstanding Malcolm's academic excellence, that being a lawyer is "no realistic goal for a nigger." In Malcolm's words: "It was then that I began to change - inside."[17]

As soon as he completed the eighth grade, Malcolm left Lansing for Boston, searching employment. Working for short periods as a shoeshine boy, a soda jerk and finally a busboy in a restaurant. In the meantime he became a habitue of the local dance halls. Robert Brisbane remarks: "For friends he picked up with slick cats and 'hipsters' in Boston's ghetto".[18] He had his hair "conked" (straightened), bought himself the latest zoot suits and by the age of 18 became a hustler in Harlem, known in the underworld as "Detroit Red". For about three years Malcolm Little led the life of a criminal: became a drug-user and -peddler, a fence for stolen goods and an armed robber. A young white woman became infatuated with him. In February 1946, he was caught, convicted and sentenced to serve ten years in prison. He was then not yet twenty-one years of age.[19]

Conversion to the Black Muslim Faith

It does not seem that Malcolm's rehabilitation had been the result of the American prison system. As Peter Goldman observes:

> "... rather, in spite of it. He served seventy-seven months in three Massachusetts penitentiaries, the first

> a stinking, century-old fortress at Charlestown with no running water, no plumbing and no notion of rehabilitation more advanced than keeping men locked in cells twenty hours a day." [20]

In an automatic fashion he joined the existing drug traffic operations and his antireligious stance earned him the nickname of "Satan". It is quite conceivable that during those seven years of imprisonment, Malcolm could have become a hardened criminal, had it not been for two particular events. First, a fellow-inmate called Bimbi, awakened in him a passion for reading good literature: "... an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and understanding."[21] Later, after being transferred to an experimental rehabilitation prison at Norfolk due to his half-sister Ella's efforts, he would use his newly acquired knowledge in frequent debates.

The second factor that contributed to Malcolm's rehabilitation, was his family's ongoing interest. An elder brother, Philbert, initially admonished him in a letter to "pray to Allah for deliverance." As this only elicited a negative reaction, they decided that the younger brother, Reginald, who knew how his "street-hustler mind operated", should approach Malcolm personally. It was this visit in late 1948 that opened a new worldview for "Detroit Red", which he would embrace and later put across to thousands of people. After Reginald explained that God's messenger was actually a black man named Elijah, he pointed to some white prisoners: "Them", he said, "The white man is the devil."[22] Encouragement by the family resulted in regular correspondence between Malcolm and Elijah Muhammad himself, then leader of the Nation of Islam (NOI).[23]

The classic reference on the teaching, growth and dynamics of this

sect is C. Eric Lincoln's *The Black Muslims in America*, but writings by Essien-Udom, Robert Kahn and others, also contain valuable information. While the "Black Muslims" consider themselves adherents of the Islamic faith (they observe the traditional rituals of prayer, a strict Islamic code of behaviour, study and read the Arabic version of the Holy Qu'ran), they deviated from the outset from orthodox Islam on fundamental points.[24] They believe that Allāh (God) appeared to the black people of Detroit in July, 1930, in the person of a peddler who became known as Master Wallace D. Farrad (or Fard), allegedly from Arabia. He was the Mahdi. During those years of depression the interest of the poor and the unemployed soared, so that Farrad's house-to-house meetings became inadequate. In a hall, that was hired and renamed The Temple of Islam, blacks were told that their true religion is Islam, not Christianity (which is the 'white man's religion'), and that they should acknowledge the glorious history of their race. The blue-eyed devils would be destroyed by God and after the apocalypse of Armageddon, the universal Black Nation would emerge as "the sole ruler of the world under Allah's benign and righteous guidance."[25]

In mid-1934 the mysterious W.D. Farrad disappeared and Elijah Muhammad (born Poole) became the last and supreme Messenger of Allāh, Infallible Teacher and Sole Commander. For more than two decades the Lost-Found Nation of Islam in the Wilderness of North America remained a small, highly secretive group known to a few black people. Central to the "Black Muslim" faith (Lincoln's term), is the notion that the creator-God is not the "mystery god"

or the "spook" worshipped by Christians, but a black man like Farrad himself. The Adam of the Bible was the first white man, that is, the first devil. By means of a "cruel elimination process", a dissident black genius, Yacub, manufactured the white race out of the recessive genes of the black. What finally ensued was "... a weak, blue-eyed, blond-haired mutant species devoid of color, character or human feeling; a bleached-out parody of man".[26] The Black Muslims also believe that the year of the apocalypse had been 1914, but God extended the judgment of whites to give blacks the opportunity to separate from the "murderous devil-race".[27] Elijah Muhammad again made this clear in an address delivered on June 21, 1963:

> The so-called Negroes must remember the poorer the White man is, the more wicked they are when it comes to the so-called Negroes. The entire black nation must know that God has revealed this race of people to be the true race of devils, and there is no righteousness in them. Nature did not give them any righteousness, says Allah to me ... Now let us go from them and build a nation ourselves that God and the nations of the earth will respect. Your loving to live and become one of the race of devils, who have proven to you for four hundred years that they do not want you for anything but to enslave you in their behalf, is outright foolish and ignorant. Do not you want your own black nation to see you in a better light of understanding? [28]

Essien-Udom places this version of separatism, which meant an actual, physical and political withdrawal from existing society, within the wider cadre of black nationalism. Besides the fact that the idea of separatism has a long-standing record in African-American history, the immediate influence of separatists like Noble Drew Ali and Marcus Garvey on Elijah's teaching is striking. There are differences between the various black nationalist movements, but their

> ... common origins are the cultural alienation and social estrangement of the urban Negro masses from the white society, the absence of a "great Negro ethos" capable of inspiring them to work together for the ends they seek, and the confusion, apathy, frustration, and disillusionment which arise in their attempt to adjust to these conditions. [29]

Although an elaboration on black nationalism as a particular school of thought lies outside the framework of this study, it should be acknowledged that Muhammad's separatism, despite its peculiar aspects, is not unique. The African-American historian, Wilson Moses, holds that the period from 1850 to 1925 was the source of the most impressive black nationalist movements that had ever emerged in the United States. "Several back-to-Africa movements came into existence during (this) period, which also witnessed the rise of significant literary and intellectual activity among black nationalists and pan-Africanists."[30] Classical black nationalist ideology is rooted in the Christian humanist tradition and names such as Lott Carey (the slave-preacher, 1780-1828), David Walker, Richard Allen (AME Church), Alexander Crummell, Martin R. Delany, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner (AME) and W.E.B. Du Bois are but a few that could be mentioned. Gayraud Wilmore argues that while the missionary zeal of the first black Americans to colonize Africa had initially been paternalist, it is out of those efforts that a new understanding of the African heritage and values of self-assertion grew.

> The Black Church, as the primary institutional expression of Black religion, and a vocal minority of Black ministers from predominantly white churches erected the politico-theological foundation for Black nationalism which provided some of the major building blocks for the structure of Black Nationalism and pan-Africanism as it developed from the early Du Bois to Malcolm X. [31]

Unquestionably, Elijah Muhammad stood in this tradition but the nature of the main difference between him and his predecessors, was his adherence to Islam. During the late-1930s he departed from the Christian humanist tradition.[32] What he created out of Farrad's initiative was, in a sense, an apolitical sect. For him Allāh has condemned the corrupt and unjust government to destruction and Muslim believers thus cannot participate in that which is evil.

This political withdrawal or separation from the white structures, has still another side. It is simultaneously coupled with economic self-improvement and addresses the problem of moral reform. The majority of individuals to have joined and remain in the Nation of Islam, are, like Malcolm Little, alienated from themselves and the outcasts of society. Differently stated, the Nation of Islam has a substantial standing record for being able "to take people out of the gutter" and cure them of their drug addiction, criminal behaviour, alcoholism, and maladjustment. In the words of James Cone: "Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam was specifically designed to address the spiritual, social, economic, and political needs of the black underclass, particularly those in prisons and urban ghettos."[33] It was therefore not boastful talk when Elijah promised: "Islam dignifies the black man, and it gives him the desire to be clean, internally and externally, and to have for the first time a sense of dignity".[34] And he would soon point to the foremost example of that transformative dynamic, who became his star-pupil - Malcolm X.

The Apostle of 'Hate'

On his release from Charlestown State Prison in 1952, Malcolm, reunited with his family in Detroit, started to recruit members for the local Black Muslim Temple No. 1. Soon his "white, slavemaster's name", Little, was replaced and crossed out by the provisional "X", which signifies an annulment of the convert's past and his link with colonial history. Later he would receive 'an original Arabic name', Malik El-Shabazz.[35] Within the next five years Malcolm became Muhammad's most able, eloquent and powerful spokesperson. Already during the summer of 1953 he was made assistant minister of the Detroit Temple, after being trained at the Chicago headquarters by the Messenger himself. The phenomenal growth the Nation of Islam enjoyed in the late 1950s, was due to Malcolm's "fishing methods" (as he called recruitment).[36] Membership grew from a few thousand in 1954 to upwards of forty thousand in 1958. One of the highlights of Malcolm's career in the Nation was when he was appointed minister to Harlem's Mosque No. 7 in 1954 - the most important pastorate after Chicago in the whole Lost-Found Nation.[37] He retained that key position until his silencing by Elijah Muhammad in December, 1963.

Interpreters disagree on the question whether Malcolm X had been an advocator of violence and a perpetrator of racial hatred. The contention here is that the martyr of 1965 was a decidedly different person than the loyal Black Muslim disciple of the Fifties. He propagated Elijah's teaching on Allāh's wrath and judgment competently, but his own development continually resulted in reinterpretations. It is possible that his childhood impressions of and

negative encounters with the white establishment could have brutalized his personality. During Malcolm's early rise in the Nation of Islam, he coupled Garvey's black nationalism (an inheritance from his father, rekindled by Elijah Muhammad) with views held over from these events in his life. He admitted that in 1953 when he was preaching to his congregation at Detroit Temple No. 1, he would get "choked up with rage."

> During slavery ... *think* of it - think of that black slave man filled with fear and dread, hearing the screams of his wife, his mother, his daughters being *taken* - in the barn, the kitchen, in the bushes! *Think* of it, my dear brothers and sisters! *Think* of hearing wives, mothers, and daughters, being raped! And you were too filled with *fear* of the rapist to do anything about it! ... this devil has the arrogance and the gall to think we, his victims, should *love* him! [38]

Whether Malcolm's self-professed rage should be put on a par with hate, is to be doubted. Essien-Udom is of the opinion that the charge of racial hatred does not hold water. Black nationalism was essentially caused by white racism, he argues, and black self-hatred its logical by-product. The Nation of Islam represents an esoteric, in-group struggle to purge lower-class blacks of this destructive self-image, subculture and perceived "place in society". The intention of the moral and economic reforms is to provide a way out for the masses of the ghettos. The ideological and racist excesses are more symptomatic and symbolic than crucial in themselves. "They reflect the harsh cruelties, discontent and the grave social malaise which afflict millions of Negroes in America."[39] From this perspective it is obvious that one cannot simply parallel black supremacy - a reaction within a specific socio-political context - with white supremacy.

Having said that, it is undeniable that Elijah Muhammad's doctrine of the intrinsic demonic nature of whites, is racist. It should also be kept in mind that no minister or member was allowed to question this "divine truth" as revealed by the Messenger who had seen Allāh. In the light of the black experience and his personal experiences, it made perfect sense to Malcolm X anyhow, and he repeatedly announced the destruction of the white devil race and their religion. As long as the ideas were contained within the secrecy of the Lost-Found Nation of Islam (thus consistent with the very idea of separatism), they were not subversive, but of therapeutic and educative value alone. However, the charisma of Malcolm X not only elicited public responses but also brought him into conflict with the established black integrationists. The transformation of the NOI from an obscure sect to a controversial national movement requires examination, as the exposure to these new challenges had been conducive to Malcolm's growing disenchantment with Muhammad's racial policies.

Imam Benjamin Karim, who had been an assistant to Malcolm X until his death, known as Benjamin 2X, recalls the incident that triggered this development. Late in the evening of April 26, 1957, a Muslim, Hinton Johnson, with two companions, saw the Harlem police beating an unidentified woman. When Johnson challenged them verbally, he himself was clubbed down and arrested. Malcolm, leading a group of Muslims, demanded hospitalization for the brother. The Harlem newspaper *The Amsterdam News*, reported at the time that the Muslims then formed a solid line in front of the 123rd Street police-station, waiting in a disciplined manner. An

excited crowd of more than 2 500 witnessed how Malcolm X faced high-ranking officers until he was satisfied with the arrangement. "For white New Yorkers", Goldman writes, "those who heard of the confrontation at all, it was a chilling glimpse of a world we didn't know existed; a world of unblinking, unforgiving black men and women who weren't afraid of our police or our guns or death itself."[40] Malcolm's theology of wrath was fast becoming the characterising mark of his ministry.

The role of the media was ambivalent. It was constructive, for without the press Malcolm X would not have enjoyed the international prominence that was to become his later. But it was also destructive as reporters should be held chiefly responsible for the image of Malcolm X as a hatemonger and a demagogue. From their point of view it made sensational television coverage to have Dr M.L. King, the perfect Apostle of Love and Malcolm X, the perfect Bad Nigger. The essential image with which the broader American public made acquaintance, was that the minister of Harlem's Temple No. 7 was a black racist, hate-teacher and an advocate of violence. My assertion is that Malcolm's personal growth deserves serious attention - even while he was still in the Nation of Islam and had to parrot the official doctrine.

Contrary to the idea of the Black Muslims constituting a close in-group, he wanted it to grow into a mass movement. In addition to the establishment of temples (or mosques), he decided early in 1959 that a monthly newspaper would be necessary to promote their cause. With the assistance of friends such as the journalist Louis Lomax

and the theologian C. Eric Lincoln, he founded the *Islamic News*, and later changed it to *Mr Muhammad Speaks*, which became a widely read publication.[41] These efforts to gain national publicity for the news of the Black Muslims, were recognized by Muhammad and during mid-1959 he sent Malcolm on a three-weeks trip to Africa as his emissary.[42]

In July 1959, a television programme entitled "The Hate that Hate Produced", was aired. Lomax had interviewed both Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X, but the editing and presentation was done by Mike Wallace. It is difficult now to fathom the producers' motives, but the interview elicited the American public's abhorence.[43] In his autobiography Malcolm notes that he was angry at the design of the production: "I think people sat just about limp when the programme went off."[44] Ironically though, the documentary resulted in catapulting Malcolm into the national spotlight. In retrospective it seems as if he had to pay a personal price for the missionary outreach he wanted to accomplish. But, as Carl Ellis expresses it, he "liberated truths which had been locked up in the mythological doctrines of the Nation of Islam and delivered them to the smoldering victims of ghettoization."[45]

Writings by Lincoln, Essien-Udom and Lomax further contributed to Malcolm's prominence, and generated numerous invitations for him to speak at universities and colleges. Although Malcolm X would always make sure to put "The Honorable Elijah Muhammad" at the centre of every statement, press conference and public address, his oratorical brilliance surpassed that of his mentor and this would become

a bone of contention in the nation of the Lost-Founds. As James Whitehurst observes: "Malcolm X was to become virtually an overnight phenomenon and the Nation of Islam the object of national curiosity, fear and derision."[46] He increasingly began to move away from the basically religious enclave that the Nation of Islam was, injecting the political traits of black nationalism. It is no wonder, therefore, that the ideologues of the Chicago headquarters were concerned that the organization would become "Malcolmized". The exposure that Malcolm now enjoyed, brought him into contact with critical-minded students, both black and white, who challenged his "white-devil" utterances. Also, when he visited Egypt and other Arab countries in 1959, he saw white Moslems enroute to Mecca. Yet, despite the doubt, he continued "preaching dogmas many of us knew that he privately did not believe."[47] According to Lomax, Malcolm carried out these public deceptions in order to maintain his organizational base.

Another concern of Malcolm X that would drive a wedge between him and Elijah, was the political inaction of the organization. By the beginning of 1960 the civil rights leadership regarded Malcolm X as a threat to the implementation of their agenda, and they started to denounce him publicly. Malcolm in return accused them of tokenism, gradualism and of leading the black masses down the path of servility. He called the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) a "freak with a black body with a white head". Martin Luther King Jr. was challenged to "come to Harlem and prove that 'peaceful suffering' is the solution to the atrocities suffered daily by Negroes throughout America."[48] What he

could not deny, however, is that the civil rights movement was acting out its philosophy, and not only were they marching and demonstrating in the streets across the nation, but they frequently were facing bodily harm and imprisonment. He began to establish personal relations with members of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Atlanta, but was more drawn to the younger civil rights activists of the Student Nonviolent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC). What it revealed to him, is that he was actually a noncombatant, even if he did stay loyal to the basic creed of the Black Muslims.[49]

The teaching of the Messenger on violence and retaliation was grounded in an ethic of vengeance: there would be an ultimate conflict between God and the white devil. In the meantime, blacks could defend themselves and take revenge only when one of their number is brutalized by white people. This in-built militancy was enhanced by the creation of a paramilitary organization, the Fruit of Islam. The irony is that Malcolm's "acts of violence" were purely rhetorical. In an effort to justify their inaction, he told a mixed crowd:

> Up to now, we haven't been involved in any violence because we don't force ourselves upon white people ... But by the same token, you might see these Negroes who believe in nonviolence and mistake us for one of them and put your hands on us thinking that we're going to turn the other cheek - *and we'll put you to death just like that*. [50]

Robert Kahn holds that the rhetoric of violence fulfilled a specific function in the broader framework of the political ideology of Malcolm X. Whites feared a separate and powerful, independent black state, Malcolm argued, as it would make black revenge

possible. But the greatest danger to their exploitative dominance is in fact not black revenge, but God's justice.[51] It is because white people knew what they were and are doing to the black oppressed masses, that they fear retaliation. "Do you know *why* the white man really hates you? It's because every time he sees your face, he sees a mirror of his crime - and his guilty conscience can't bear to face it!"[52]

As America's "angriest black man" Malcolm assisted the media in creating the role of the extremist, the nation's bogey man.[53] It was an image he would later regret, but unintentionally he made the civil rights leaders and their demands seem more "reasonable" to the white establishment. Still, at least once he wanted to go further than those violent verbal attacks. In a sense the pressure to do so had been both internal and external. While self-defence was justifiable as Elijah Muhammad taught, Black Muslims had to wait for Allāh's great Day of Judgment or "Doomsday" when divine vengeance would be visited on the white devil race. Malcolm X went further, claiming that manifestations of divine wrath could already be seen:

> We believe that God is angry with America and that God will continue to whip America with rain and snow and hail and floods and drought like America has never known before. We believe that God will continue to whip America with sickness, disease and plagues like America has never known before. [54]

However, the younger Black Muslims were growing impatient with mere references to Allāh's wrath and were "itching for action, for revenge." In the same vein, non-Muslim black militants began to criticize Malcolm that "he and his group were all talk and no

action"; that they were "paper-tigers".[55] An occasion to transpose the violent rhetoric to violent retaliation in April 1962, arose when Los Angeles police officers assaulted and killed some members of the Nation of Islam. Malcolm demanded of the Fruit of Islam: "What the *hell* you in here for?" and then flew in to California, with the intention of activating the revenge. "Only a late minute fiat from Elijah stopped them from carrying out what would have been a bloody act of retribution."[56] George Breitman mentions Malcolm's frustration at being restrained and that while all other forms of political protest were also taboo.[57]

As Malcolm's stature grew and his thought developed, the relationship between the Messenger and his foremost disciple deteriorated. Coverage on the ideas and actions of Malcolm X decreased in the official mouthpiece *Mr Muhammad Speaks*. A compilation of Malcolm's last speeches by Bruce Perry includes two 1963 university lectures. Although trapped in the confines of official ideology, both illustrate the development of his mind since his conversion in 1948. He still demanded a completely separate state. This "divine solution that God has given to the Honorable Elijah Muhammad" would divert "a bloody race war" and permanently solve the plight of the Black masses. Land is essential to freedom, equality, and true independence. The "white former slave-master" would have to compensate "his 22 million ex-slaves" for the "mistreatment that our people have suffered these 400 years in the hands of this cruel, inhuman white man."

> ...we didn't come of our own volition. We were brought here in chains at the bottom of a slave ship. And since we didn't pay transportation here, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad says that the contribution that the Black man made in this

> country, which amounts to 310 years of slave labor for which we have never been given a dime or a cent, places a burden upon the American white man today for which the government should pay. [58]

Compare that with "A Message to the Grass Roots" delivered in November 1962 at the Northern Negro Leadership Conference in Detroit. As usual he argued in favour of the necessity of a "bloody revolution" for nonviolence "could not be called a revolution." But he broke with the premise that Christianity was *in toto* a white slave-religion, and his emphasis on transreligious or ecumenic action had clearly been heretical in terms of Elijah Muhammad's sectarian exclusiveness.

> What you and I need to do is learn *to forget our differences*. When we come together, we don't come together as Baptists or Methodists. You don't catch hell because you're a Baptist and you don't catch hell because you're a Methodist ... you don't catch hell because you're a Democrat or a Republican, you don't catch hell because you're a Mason, or an Elk, and you sure don't catch hell because you're an American ... once we all realize that we have a common enemy, then we *unite* - on the basis of what we have in common. And what we have foremost in common is that enemy - the white man. [59]

The estrangement deepened when Malcolm X confronted Elijah Muhammad during 1963 about the latter's alleged adulterous acts. This was painful for not only had he believed "... that if Mr Muhammad was not God, then he surely stood next to God", but because the Chicago headquarters would summarily oust any other Muslim guilty of acts contrary to the accepted moral code. He himself was still alienated from his younger brother as "years before, Mr Muhammad had silenced Reginald to 'isolation' from all other Muslims - and I considered that I was a Muslim before I was Reginald's brother."[60] One should thus understand that when he was ultimately silenced by Muhammad it had not been a sudden disciplinary act, but the culmi-

nation of a series of hidden differences. Brisbane observes that the Black Muslim leader only sought "a suitable and plausible cause to sack him..."[61]

The chance to discharge Malcolm presented itself when president John Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963. Within hours Elijah dispatched a directive to all ministers not to comment on it. In what was to become his last speech for the Nation of Islam, entitled "God's judgment of white America" (delivered on December 4, 1963), Malcolm claimed that the late president's liberalism did not achieve anything substantial as the socio-economic problems of the black people were still not solved.[62] But it was his remarks during the question-and-answer session afterwards that constituted disobedience to the Messenger's directive. He responded to a question, arguing that Kennedy's death was a case of "the chickens coming home to roost", implying that the president's death had been the inevitable consequence of a climate of hate and violence in America. Then he added: "Being an old farm boy myself, chickens coming home to roost never did make me sad, they've always made me glad".[63] Elijah Muhammad "silenced" Malcolm X which meant that he could not preach, make statements or grant interviews for ninety days.

The Pilgrim

Although Malcolm subjected himself to the conditions of the suspension, Elijah did not reinstate him at the end of February 1964, as he should have. Malcolm acknowledged the severance of his ties with the Nation of Islam with bitterness. Not only had he served

the movement well for twelve years, but he assumed that the father figure-and-son relationship would override the dispute:

> The thing worse to me than death was the betrayal ... During the previous twelve years, if Mr Muhammad had committed any civil crime punishable by death, I would have said and tried to prove that I did it - to save him - and I would have gone to the electric chair, as Mr Muhammad's servant. [64]

George Breitman divides the last year of Malcolm X into two phases, namely, the first months of transition, and the latter part he describes as the "evolution of a revolutionary".[65] On March 8, 1964, Malcolm announced that he was starting a new organization, the Muslim Mosque, Incorporated (MMI). He did not wish a split in the Nation of Islam, and consequently only a small number of the Harlem members followed him. Some scholars consider the first phase to be a period of confusion. However, Malcolm suddenly lacked a strong organizational base with its fixed structure, and he had to test and question his own capabilities. He had not yet developed a completely new ideology. When, for example, he was interviewed by A.B. Spellman on March 19, 1964, he simply reiterated the quest for a separate black state: "...we still believe in the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's solution of complete separation."[66] He also disclosed that while the overarching philosophy of the MMI would be black nationalism so that "there would be room for any black to participate in its secular program whether or not they believed in Allāh or in any god at all", it was nevertheless a religious organization.[67] It was a period of errors and uncertainties and his second trip to Africa and the Middle East during April-May 1964, is proof that he was searching anew. At another level, it had also been a time of stress as death-threats filtered through and the Nation of Islam decided to evict him, his wife, Betty and children,

from its house.[68]

The new direction in Malcolm's life had begun with the differences with Muhammad and an increasing recognition of the openness of some white people (especially students), but it was not decisive. After an interview with Dr Mahmoud Youssef Shawarbi at the Islamic Center of New York, he became convinced that making the pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca would be imperative for his future life. His half-sister Ella lent him the money and on April 13 he left to discover the orthodox Islamic faith. Whitehurst's comment that for Malcolm X the hajj was "an earthshaking experience", is borne out by the pilgrim's own words:

> I have never before seen *sincere* and *true* brotherhood practiced by all colors together, irrespective of their color. You may be shocked by these words coming from me. But on this pilgrimage, what I have seen, and experienced, has forced me to *rearrange* much of my thought-patterns previously held, and to *toss aside* some of my previous conclusions . [69]

John D Groppe points out that this new vision of the oneness of humankind, was the result of a growth process.[70] Apart from its social-political implication, the conversion to orthodox Islam also meant that the existing gulf between him and the Black Muslims would widen: "I totally reject Elijah Muhammad's racist philosophy, which he has labelled "Islam" only to fool and misuse gullible people, as he fooled and misused me".[71] After the hajj he held that most white Americans were racists who have injected their bigotry into white American institutions, but they were not racist by nature.

The second part of his trip was not so much religious, as politi-

cal. Visits to Egypt, Ghana, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Morocco, Algeria and other places challenged his "narrowly conceived black nationalistic mentality."[72] When, for example, he clarified his vision to link the destinies of Afro-America and Africa around the determinant of colour, the then Algerian ambassador to Accra, Taher Kaid, smiled and said: "Well, brother Malcolm, that sort of leaves me out, doesn't it? I'm a Muslim brother and a revolutionary, but I'm not black - I'm Caucasian."[73] Embracing pan-Africanism meant rejecting black ethnocentrism. A more realistic approach ensued: African-Americans, Malcolm concluded, would physically remain in the United States, but they still need to 'return' to Africa philosophically and culturally. He thus remained an Islamic separatist, discarding the notion of desegregation as theologically unjust and politically untenable.

Malcolm X was back in the United States on May 21, now as El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. A comparative study of his speeches prior to the pilgrimage (see for example, Karim's compilation) and the post-Mecca addresses (edited by Perry and Breitman), show other mental and several conceptual changes: 1. He wanted to raise the struggle for civil rights to the level of human rights in order to enable African-Americans to charge the United States government before the United Nations (with the help of African-Asian rulers); 2. He began to criticize capitalism, although it is doubtful that Malcolm X was on his way becoming a full-fledged socialist as Breitman seems to suggest;[74] and 3. He was turning away from the territorial separatist position. On June 28, 1964, a secular Organization for Afro-American Unity (OAAU) was founded in New

York to realize his political vision, while the MMI would fulfil the religious needs.[75] These shifts are significant, but the crucial question is how the later Malcolm X approached the issues of retaliation and revolution.

His ethic of vengeance is further developed as he allows for the possibility of retaliatory violence ("reciprocal bleeding") in tension with the politics of power. Nowhere is this strategy more evident than in his "The Ballot or the Bullet" talk given at Cleveland's Cory Methodist Church on April 3, 1964. He envisaged a black nationalist party which would strive for political, economic and social upliftment, but an army would also be formed - if deemed necessary.

> If you don't take an uncompromising stand - I don't mean go out and get violent; but at the same time you should never be nonviolent unless you run into some nonviolence. I'm nonviolent with those who are nonviolent with me. But when you drop that violence on me, then you've made me go insane, and I'm not responsible for what I do. And that's the way every so-called Negro should get. Any time you know you're within the law, within your legal rights, within your moral rights, in accord with justice, then die for what you believe in. But don't die alone. Let your dying be reciprocal. This is what is meant by equality. What's good for the goose is good for the gander ... It'll be ballot or the bullet. It'll be liberty or it'll be death. [76]

It is interesting that although Malcolm X started to think in terms of political and economic solutions, he never retracted his insistence on the right of self-defence. In "The Black Revolution" (April 4, 1964) he demanded that blacks had to be given "full use of the ballot in every one of the fifty states."[77] He reckoned that the intelligent employment of the black vote could be a powerful factor in the politics of balance, and he showed

willingness to work with the established black leadership toward that goal. His dream of a bloodless revolution, however, never cancelled the right of the individual to retaliate when physically attacked. Because the majority of his listeners were Christians, he frequently quoted relevant Biblical texts to substantiate his case.

> That old Uncle Tom-type Negro is dead. Our people have no more fear of anyone, no more fear of anything. And we're not afraid to take the lives of those who try to take our lives. We believe in a fair exchange. An eye for an eye. A tooth for a tooth. A head for a head and a life for a life. If this is the price of freedom, we won't hesitate to pay the price. [78]

From July to November 1964, he made a third trip to Africa and the Middle East. While he was abroad, riots erupted in Harlem, which later became known as The Long Hot Summer. The effect of Malcolm's violent talk was incalculable because he never called for a riot, but black kids were running in the streets, shouting: "Malcolm! We want Malcolm!" They threatened the police: "Wait till Malcolm comes!"[79] When he returned to the United States, his politics could be summed up by the two phrases he coined: he was "flexible" and he would fight for freedom "by any means necessary."[80] In Goldman and Lomax's view Malcolm created a space for maneuverability, asking himself what the viable response would be in a specific situation. It is an indication of his argument that for a minority (demographically speaking), non-alignment was the wisest policy. It meant a weighing of all political options, while retaining violent retaliation as an alternative. Until his death Malcolm X kept up the rhetoric of violence, without actually organizing a riot, or any public disturbance. He exploited the fear of the whites: "he ... knew how frightened white America was

of the black revenge."[81]

Meanwhile the death threats against him had increased: ".. he was stalked and tracked like a hunted animal."[82] He believed that he would not live long enough to see his autobiography appear: "...I live as if I'm already dead."[83] During the night of February 14, 1965, a firebomb partly destroyed his home and he had to rush his family to safety. Malcolm assumed it was an atlack by Black Muslims and hinted at revenge: "There are hunters; there are also those who hunt the hunters!"[84]

On February 21, Malcolm planned to explain the reorganization of the OAAU at New York City's Audubon Ballroom. Distressed at the absence of invited speakers, he let his associate, Benjamin 2X, make the introductory speech. When he had finished, Malcolm greeted as was customary: "As-salaam alaikum", and the people responded "Wa-alaikum salaam". Within the next minute he was shot by two black men who were part of the audience. Some analysts are convinced that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had infiltrated the movement and "may have been working behind the scenes to stir up rivalry between the two black leaders (Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X) in order to discredit them both. To this date the murder remains unsolved."[85] The burial of Malcolm X was officiated in accordance with classical Moslem ritual, by such teachers as Sheik Ahmed Hassoun (then the MMI's spiritual advisor), Omar Osman and Sheik Alhajj Heshaam Jaaber. Three years later James Forman, then an executive member of the SNCC, set forth ideas about assassination and retaliation at a rally in Berkeley, on

February 4, 1968:

> We will not stand by and allow black leadership to be assassinated, as Brother Malcolm was assassinated, without full retaliation. And I say this and I'm going to tell you what my price is, and you pick out which one you want or contribute to:
>
> ten war factories destroyed
> fifteen blown-up police stations
> thirty power plants destroyed, demolished
> no flowers
> one Southern Governor
> two mayors
> five hundred racist cops dead . ee

In the following subsection an attempt is made to provide an insight into the wide-ranging influence of Malcolm X on the on-going evolvement of African-American religion, culture, and political thought. Naturally the question arises concerning the relevance of his story to our moral problematic of political revenge in South Africa. At the outset assessors of the Malcolmite "ethic of reciprocal bleeding" must realize that he represented the desires, frustrations, fears and hope of the urban underclasses, and more particularly the angry youth. Black theological interpreters need to acknowledge the consistency of Malcolm's ethic-from-below as the hermeneutical key to understanding the soul of this twentieth century ghetto-prophet, and the phenomenon of racial vengeance in white oppressive contexts.

Voice of the Black Ghetto

The significance of the message of Malcolm X for South Africa could be discussed at various levels. For example, his discovery that racism is not a universal phenomenon, which led to a radical reconstruction of black nationalism to include white revolutionaries. This development can be compared to blacks who have embraced Black

Consciousness (that is, Stephen Biko's value-system of black self-pride, unity, and self-determination), and yet go beyond that to a policy of nonracialism. The complexity of the latter, in Malcolm's case, lies in his retention of pan-Africanism along with the conviction that racism is not an aberration of individual white people, but an integral part of a system of oppression. Though he turned away from demanding a separate homeland, William Becker asserts that, for Malcolm, white America never became "home" in a spiritual sense.[87] Also, the essence of his critique of Christianity in the United States is applicable to the history of Christendom in South Africa:

> The Christian church became infected with racism when it entered white Europe. The Christian church returned to Africa under the banner of the Cross - conquering, killing, exploiting, pillaging, raping, bullying, beating - and teaching white supremacy. The white man has perverted the simple message of love that the Prophet Jesus lived and taught when he walked upon this earth. [88]

His initial equation of slavery and white supremacy with Christianity had been faulty, but the kernel of its truth could not be denied. The reactions of black Christians in the United States varied: some ignored the critique and others joined the Nation of Islam. But there were those like C. Eric Lincoln, Gayraud Wilmore and James Cone whose black theology was partly a constructive response to this challenge. Cone admits: "The rise of Black Power and black theology was largely due to the influence of Malcolm X." [89] The pastor of the Shrine of the Black Madonna in Detroit, Albert Cleage Jr., even designed a "Black Christian Nationalism" in which he recognized the influence of Malcolm X:

> We needed Brother Malcolm to interpret the simple truth that the white man is an enemy. He revealed to us the fact that we are dealing with an enemy structure, and that even when white people say that they are liberal they still hate Black people be-

> cause they are partners in the white declaration of Black inferiority. [90]

A valid question would be how the critique of Malcolm X posed a challenge to South African black theologians in the late-Sixties, albeit in an indirect way. The major concern, expressed here, is to determine how retaliation functioned in his quest for political and economic power. Three factors have to be considered: first, Malcolm X represented a specific tradition within the African-American history of resistance; second, although he cherished his "demagogue" role, that image had been primarily the creation of the white-controlled, mass-communications media; third, he based it on religious convictions.

The right to self-defence crystallised as a school of thought since the earliest days of slavery - the "rape of Africa".[91] Untold numbers of Africans would leap from slave ships or commit suicide during the passage. The first known revolt by slaves in America occurred in 1526 and numerous conspiracies, incidents, abortive plots and actual armed uprisings followed. Vengeance had always been a strong motive as an examination of, for example, the New York City insurrection of 1712 and 1741 would show: "In revenge for ill-treatment by their masters, twenty-three Negroes rose on April 6, 1712, to slaughter the whites ..."[92] Conspiracies like those of Gabriel Prosser in 1800; the Camden plot of June 1816, which envisaged a concerted attempt to burn the town and massacre its inhabitants; Denmark Vesey's in 1821-22 and Nathaniel Turner's in 1831 gained national notoriety.[93] Early militant slave speeches by Robert Alexander Young in February 1829 argue that the Bible contains: "...oracles of retribution for the white man and resurrec-

tion and vindication for the Black; by Daniel Payne in 1839 that "slavery brutalizes" humanity, and Henry Highland Garnet's "Address to the Slaves of the USA" in 1843 in which he "revealed some of the most profound dilemmas of the black abolitionist position", all added to the formation of a persistent thread in African-American history, namely, violent resistance.[94]

> Tell them (your lordly enslavers) in language which they cannot misunderstand, of the exceeding sinfulness of slavery, and of a future judgment, and of the righteous retributions of an indignant God ... Brethren, arise, arise! Strike for your lives and liberties. Now is the day and the hour. Let every slave throughout the land do this, and the days of slavery are numbered ... Rather die freemen than live to be slaves. [95]

Slaves also survived their shackles with an affirmation of the justice of God contemplating God's final judgment of the slave-owner. Natural disasters would be accepted as signs of divine vengeance. An ex-slave, Martha Browne-Griffiths, reflected in her autobiography on this expectation: "An avenging angel sits concealed 'mid the drapery of the wasting cloud, ready to pour the vials of a haughty and oppressive race."[96] The demonology of the Christian tradition was attractive because of its teaching on a "burning hell", and it was reinterpreted as righteous punishment for the slave-master.[97] At times this belief in the justice of God ignited the desire to retaliate: "Black slaves' faith in the coming justice of God", James Cone writes, "was the chief reason why they could hold themselves together in servitude and sometimes fight back ..."[98] To resist oppression - with violence if necessary - had been "the most determinative undercurrent in the Black church."[99] This is the tradition in which Malcolm X stood and in the late Fifties and early Sixties he would become its chief advocate.

The white-controlled mass media, in general, did not display a sensitivity for, or recognition of these divergent traditions. Sensationalism dictated the need to portray Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X as enemies, while King in fact represented another (and broader) strategy within the history of black resistance. "Beneath the docility and adjustment", Eugene Genovese notes, "(ran) dangerous and strong currents."[100] A monolithic reading of the Black Revolution is therefore unhistorical: it is spectral. Robert Williams' indication of who represents the moral suasionist stance is too simplistic and therefore misleading, but is nevertheless an effort to discharge the images of "hero" versus "bad nigger".[101] It needs to be emphasized that the militant version of moral suasion of King was also rooted in the long struggle for black equality. It conjures up the indirectly aggressive forms of protest against slavery: malingering, working slow, running away, striking, and petitions, but King remolded the nonviolent stratagem.'[102]

In his in-depth comparative study on Martin and Malcolm, Cone profiles their similarities and differences. He perceives their sharing of the same goal as the most important similarity between them. Both "sought the unqualified liberation of African-Americans from the bonds of segregation and discrimination to self-determination as a people, from a feeling of inferiority and nobodyness to an affirmation of themselves as human beings."[103] The fact that they pursued different methods to realize that goal, should be seen as complimentary; "as two roads to freedom". Cone's observation is born out by Malcolm's progressive understanding of the interre-

latedness of the various strategies. Malcolm X began to show "reluctant admiration" for and a cordiality toward Martin King in the later years of his life:

> The goal has always been the same, with the approaches to it as different as mine and Dr Martin Luther King's nonviolent marching, that dramatizes the brutality and the evil of the white man and defenseless blacks ... He's a preacher, but he's a fighter for the black man. [104]

Cone further contends that the two leaders were both deeply religious persons whose theologies were shaped by the cardinal values of justice, love, and hope - themes that were rooted in the African-American religious experience. However, whereas Martin gave priority to the universality of love (especially of the oppressor through nonviolence), Malcolm's love of black people was primary. Consequently Malcolm made justice the highest priority in his theology. The fight for justice was for him "the central religious act":

> While Martin's theology focused on love and forgiveness and the hope that blacks and whites could create the American dream, could create the beloved community, Malcolm's theology stressed strict justice and stern punishment and the hope that God would destroy the entire white race and then establish a world of peace and goodwill among all blacks. [105]

What is interesting is that during the mid-Sixties Martin King increasingly became aware of economic injustice in the United States. His dismay at the refusal of many whites to combat that reality, resulted in his moving closer to Malcolm's perspective. "The resistance was so great that Martin began to see America through the eyes of the poor in the ghetto."[106]

It was especially in the light of Martin King's major emphasis on

the universality of love, that Malcolm had been accused of being a hate-preacher. This he emphatically denied. White people, Malcolm told Alex Haley, used him as a "convenient symbol of hatred" in order to escape the responsibility to face their history of "unspeakable crimes".[107] Also, in the ideological framework of black nationalism, non-love for whites does not constitute racial hatred. "As soon as the white man hears a black man say that he's through loving white people, then the white man accuses the black man of hating him."[108] It was an intense anger (rage) at the historical and continuing injustices of "the collective white man" against blacks, and not hatred, that motivated him. It is in the light of this negative reality that his bitter remarks should be understood. Being angry at injustice was a requisite element in the struggle for human rights. Logically, he regarded the adherence to nonviolence as proof of a deficiency on the part of civil rights leaders.[109] Therefore, Malcolm identified racial hatred as a reality in the ghettos, but it did not become a motive for his own involvement in the struggle for human rights.

The prevalent mood or "temper of the ghetto" had been examined by the journalist Samuel F. Yette, the theologian Philip Huckaby, the psychiatrists William Grier, Price Cobbs and others. They found that the black lower-class feels rejected by American society, which results in an identity crisis; that black rage is historical for the condition of oppression is a remnant of slavery. The United States government's exploitative economic system makes African-Americans in some cases obsolete and nonproductive people.[110] They are, in Ellis' words, "the smoldering victims of ghettoization".[111]

Malcolm knew from his personal background what unemployment, hunger and poverty meant and "the soil from which" aggression, frustration and desperation came.[112] In like manner, the task of black liberation theologians in South Africa can never be the mere pacification of the townships' angry "young lions", but to admit, reflect and act upon that pent-up frustration and rage.[113] Neither did Malcolm X advocate black revenge, but he read the signs of the time, so that the poor of the ghettos viewed him as "the vicarious agent of their own secret furies."[114] According to Grier and Cobbs the sufferers would redirect the hatred they had turned on themselves toward "the tormentor".[115] Malcolm publicly predicted the riots of the Long Hot Summer of 1964, and he sought to rechannel the existing rage into political and economic power structures.

> The 22 million Afro-Americans are not yet filled with ... the desire for vengeance as the propaganda of the segregationists would have you believe. The universal law of justice is sufficient to bring judgment upon those whites who are guilty of racism. It will punish those who have benefited from the racist practices of their forefathers and done nothing to atone for them ... Thus it is not necessary for the victim - the Afro-American - to be vengeful. The very conditions that whites created are already plaguing them into insanity and death. They are reaping what they have sown. We, the 22 million Afro-Americans - the victims - will do better to spend our time removing the scars from our people, scars left by 400 years of inhuman treatment in America. [116]

What he acknowledged, is the right of self-defence in personal and practical situations. When blacks become the victims of physical attack by white vigilantes such as the Ku Klux Klan, they are obligated to protect themselves and their families. All he wanted to assert was "the ethical principle of self-survival for African-Americans, a right which whites took for granted, both legally and morally."[117] In order to realize his insistence on "reciprocal

bleeding", he even voiced the need in 1964 to form self-defence units ("rifle clubs").[118] Thus Malcolm, who rose from "the cesspool of society", highlighted the issue of retaliatory violence as the only alternative left in a race war situation.[119]

Conclusion

1. Malcolm Little had been introduced to Marcus Garvey's religio-philosophy at a very early stage of his life. The instillment of racial pride, African nationalism, and self-respect made a definite impact on his personality. The culture of black consciousness also made an impression on Malcolm during his formative years. However, these positive influences were truncated by self-alienating child-hood experiences to such an extent, that he became a juvenile delinquent. It was while he was serving a number of years in prison that Malcolm was converted to the Lost-Found Nation of Islam, which was at that time still an obscure, moral force. During his 12-years career as a minister of the NOI, Malcolm X became its most dynamic spokesperson and he transformed it from an isoteric, religious sect into a controversial, national movement.

2. The impact that Garvey's impressive back-to-Africa movement had on the Messenger, Elijah Muhammad, is also evident in Malcolm's theology. This ideology of separatism needs to be read within the wider framework of black nationalism. The NOI's separatist stance, however, rested on the strong apocalyptic expectation that Allāh would wreak vengeance on "the white devil-race". Blacks therefore did not need to take

revenge against their oppressors, for the divine visitation on white people is certain. Malcolm became progressively disenchanted with Muhammad's racist doctrine of the intrinsic demonic nature of whites, and impatient with the sole reliance on Allāh's wrathful intervention. His growing frustrations meant shifting ideologically closer to the civil rights movement, but he neither became an integrationist nor a nonviolent preacher. Malcolm's extremist, demagogue-image was essentially a product of the mass media, but he helped to create it. Natural disasters and accidental calamities were interpreted as manifestations of God's wrath, a view that was readily held by slaves during the previous centuries. But Allāh's imminent Day of Judgment does not mean a negation of the right of self-defence in violent, racist situations.

3. An analysis of Malcolm's autobiography and his speeches confirms that he makes a distinction between revenge and retaliatory violence. It is in personal situations where lawless vigilantism is rife, that people need to defend themselves. This militant stance should be placed within a wider cadre. Just as moral suasion, the right to self-defence is an African-American school of thought since the earliest days of slavery. Malcolm X therefore represents a particular method or tradition within the history of black resistance. However, it is crucial to note that Malcolm's insistence on "reciprocal bleeding" amounted to nothing more than violent verbal attacks. He never organized an insurrection or a holy war, nor did he realize the proposed self-defence units.

4. In the theology of Malcolm X the quest for justice enjoyed the place of precedence. The resolvement of God's wrath requires a thorough redress of the wrongs blacks have to suffer. His rage at America's history of injustice and the on-going oppression of black people, should not be interpreted as racial hatred. The role of the media in making him a demagogue, again should not be underestimated. Two central Malcolmite themes have a direct bearing on our main thesis: Firstly, his Islamic, separatist critique of Christianity and the USA government was underpinned by a demand that blacks should be compensated for the suffering experienced. The demand for reparations emerges here as a form of economic justice. Secondly, while Malcolm did not advocate black revenge, he based his argument in favour of retaliatory violence on orthodox Islamic principles. The apocalyptic expectation that the divine Doomsday will inaugurate the final destruction of the oppressor, does not annul the right of blacks to defend themselves against white hate-groups. An evaluation of the ethical implications of these themes for the South African situation is deferred to the final chapter.

Malcolm's own dream was different from Martin's, but then again, so was his constituency, his strategy, and his religion:

> Sometimes, I have dared to dream to myself that one day, history may even say that my voice - which disturbed the white man's smugness and his arrogance, and his complacency - that my voice helped to save America from a grave, possibly even a fatal catastrophe ... I know that societies often have killed the people who have helped to change those societies. And if I can die having brought any light, having exposed any meaningful truth that will help to destroy the racist cancer that is malignant in the body of America - then, all of the credit is due to Allah. Only the mistakes have been mine . [120]

Part Three

REFLECTIONS ON DIVINE ANGER, HUMAN VENGEANCE, AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Preface to Part Three

Our historical survey of the occurrence of human vengeance within the South African context (Part One) illumines its linkage to colonial oppression and systemic apartheid violence. This is a form of aggression and violence that continues to manifest itself in dispossession. The indigenous people's landlessness requires a theological ethic in which, *inter alia*, the restoration of land to the dispossessed and the displaced is addressed. Yet, the authentic African sense of inclusiveness and sharing precludes unilateral action in this regard. In brief, a purely Christian ethic is not sufficient. Humanistic, Jewish, Islamic, and other religious or nonreligious contributions are necessary in shaping the rudiments of a comprehensive ethic of vengeance for a pluralistic, inclusive solution to the problem.

The final part of the thesis is directed towards this objective. It is divided into two subsections: The first being a Scriptural or Judeo-Christian response to the challenge - giving emphasis to the Christian focus of this particular thesis. The second is an attempt to broaden this focus by drawing on the various strands, issues, and questions raised in the first two parts of this study to provide a more inclusive (inter-faith) theological argument. Here the examined manifestations of political rage and human vengeance are scrutinized in the light of Christian as well as Judaic and Islamic ethical traditions. The different levels of this ethic are used as a basis from which to consider the challenges facing God's wrathful children who are obliged to respond creatively and positively to the challenging needs of society. Far from this being merely a theological justification of the politics of revenge, it acquires a pastoral function geared to face the realities of pent-up rage, mutual fears and human brokenness, relating them to the question of reconstruction and ultimately to national reconciliation.

CHAPTER SIX

CONTOURS OF AN ECUMENICAL ETHIC OF VENGEANCE, RETRIBUTION AND RENEWAL

> The hour in which the church today prays for God's Kingdom is one that forces the church, for good or ill, to identify itself completely with the children of the earth and of the world. It binds the church by oaths of fealty to the earth ... to misery, to hunger, to death. It is no time for solitary whispering, "O that I may be saved", but for joining in the common silence that cries aloud, "O that this world which has forged us into a unity in the crucible of grief and pain, may pass away, and thy kingdom come to us."
>
> - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The challenge to design an ethic of vengeance appropriate for our situation arises out of the black experience of despair and alienation, the age-long history of structural violence, the "negation of Black humanity", and at times the collaborative role of the churches in that history.[1] This negative dimension of South African history has made wrath and revenge central to popular resistance culture. While important in bringing matters to a head, this dangerous and unavoidable ingredient of black political involvement contributes to rendering the transformation of our society a difficult process. As a specific, theological dimension of the debate on societal change, Jesus' stance on human vengeance, as well as the Pauline interpretations, are indispensable.

In the introduction to this thesis it is suggested that the quest for vengeance needs to be weighed in view of traditional theological categories such as love, forgiveness, sacrifice and peace. On the one hand, some would argue that these values seem *a priori* to obliterate the genesis of a Christian "ethic of vengeance." On the other hand, the

question emerges whether the specific content of such values does not need to change in changing contexts. Put differently, we are at one level called to passionate obedience to the words of Jesus; at another level we are located in a world of alienation where our Christian belief must be worked out anew in the light of new challenges. That is to say, our essential Christian ethic must be a responsible ethic applicable to the demands of our time.

The teaching of Jesus of Nazareth and the apostle Paul, it is argued here, cannot be taken as a compilation of timeless, universal and abstract truths. Their "sayings" emerged within a specific religious and social-political realm. Thus it is the cultural milieu and the material conditions of first-century Palestine that constitute the natural backdrop against which the biblical teaching should be evaluated. The reconsidering of Zealotism in the third chapter already provides some valuable insights into the social world of the New Testament. In the following paragraphs the *Sitz im Leben Jesu* (especially as derived from the Markan *Urtext* and Q material) is taken into account in our search for the Gospel's directive on human vengeance.

A JUDEO-CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

> The eschatological nature of the Kingdom is understood when we look at how it is precisely opposite to what existed prior to its inception. Jesus reversed the reality he encountered by turning it, so to speak, on its head ... We speak, therefore, of the presence of the Kingdom, but at the same time of its coming in the future. Because it is not yet here we hope for it, but to hope for it means that in some sense we are already living under its power which impels us to "make it real".
>
> - Gayraud S. Wilmore

Enemy Love or An Eye for An Eye?

Jesus' teaching, as a reading of the Synoptic gospels makes clear, was focused on the proclamation of God's kingdom or reign (the *basileia theou*) as a present and future reality. Any discussion on his reference to the notion of vengeance can therefore only take place within this broad kerygmatic framework. The question, of course, is: what did the announcement mean concretely to its original hearers? Whether Jesus and his immediate hearers shared the same symbolic universe, however, depends on the nature of the association - a matter which requires examination.

If the Lucan version of Jesus' birth has historic validity, namely that it occurred when Quirinius conducted a tax-determining census in 6 C.E. (Lk. 2:1-7), then the Roman annexation of Judea as a province during that year establishes the event's location. According to Josephus the prospect of imperial rule elicited opposition from Pharisaic dissenters who then formed a "fourth philosophy", alongside the Sadducees, Essenes and Pharisees. This essentially theological protest had far-reaching political implications as it seriously called into question the caesars'

self-deification. Expectation of and belief in God's kingship made the adulation of the emperor as "king" and "lord", blasphemous.[2] It is therefore crucial to note that when Jesus eventually fashioned a ministry centred on "the rule of God", the apocalyptic language in which the kingdom-motif was wrapped, was already pervasive in the Second Temple period.

It is further shown by John Stambaugh and David Balch that the social environment in which Jesus grew up, was in part dominated by Greek culture. Its impingement upon Eastern traditions already started during the fourth century B.C.E., when Alexander of Macedon violently expanded the Graeco "inhabited world" (*gē oikoumenē*) to include other cultures. Roman involvement commenced at the end of the following century, and by the time of Jesus' birth the Jewish *Weltanschauung* was not free from Graeco-Roman influence and *vice versa*.[3] The client king Herod, whose hellenizing endeavours were related by Josephus to his Roman overlords, still reigned until 4 B.C.E.[4] Imperial rule evoked (among other responses such as the high priestly collaboration) the hope of the poor and powerless that Yahweh would soon destroy the heathen rulers and vindicate his/her oppressed children. We should also pay attention to the relation of Jesus to his predecessor, John the Baptist (Mk. 1:1-8, Mt. 3:1-17, Lk. 3:1-20), as the latter's prophesying of God's impending wrath had a profound effect on certain sectors of the subjugated community. Being Galileans, both were the subjects of Herod's son, Antipas, who ruled as the region's tetrarch until Gaius Caligula dismissed him in 39 C.E.[5]

The strong apocalyptic content of John the Baptist's preaching is poin-

ted out by Howard Clark Kee. During the twenties of the first century C.E., in an oppressive situation of Roman domination, John proclaimed God's judgment on the evil of the world. Only repentance (*metanoia*) he claimed, would divert the crisis and ensure divine forgiveness.

> ... at the heart of John's message was his proclamation of the "day of wrath", the imminent coming of God's Messiah to pronounce judgment upon the world. It was to this proclamation that Jesus, along with many others, responded. The young Galilean saw in John the chosen herald of what was to be God's most decisive action in human history. [6]

It is therefore conceivable that the development of Jesus' "messianic consciousness" was partly due to his contact with John the Baptist. Adducing evidence from the Josephan narrative, Kee argues that John had been executed by Herod Antipas for a more serious matter than is conveyed by the Synoptic disclosure (Mk. 6:17-29, Mt. 14:3-12). His wrathful, apocalyptic vision assumed a political trait that could inspire a peasant uprising. Jesus began his ministry in Galilee under "the shadow of the death of John" and the probability that he too would be persecuted.[7] It is thus in the realm of the millennial mood of the suffering masses and the apocalypticism of John the Baptist, that Jesus' view on vengeance must be analysed. For the crowds that followed the healer, his proclaimed "good news" (*euangelion*) meant "... only one thing: In a short time God would establish his divine kingdom in all the world. This message had particular appeal in Galilee, for it meant not only release from the iron rule of Rome, but also from the hated Herod Antipas."[8] Whether Jesus' own interpretation of the divine reign correlated with these 'wrathful' expectations needs, to the extent that this is possible, to be clarified.

It is noted by Anthony Saldarini that in the Markan narrative Jesus is

identified as belonging to a "lower-class artisan family" (Mk. 6:2-3). Despite his lack of social status in the Galilean community, some came to accept him as a leader because he developed "a reputation", or recognition as one ready to challenge the existing social order. Especially the village people, themselves victims of structural violence, acknowledged him as "a patron" who had gained a reputation for criticizing the existing authorities.[9] The close association between Jesus and the 'people of the land' (*'am ha-aretz*) cannot be denied. Seán Freyne draws the attention to the rural imagery frequently employed by the wandering teacher to explain the message of the kingdom. Naturally, it established a rapport with the peasantry who, in spite of their attachment to Jerusalem, refused to be encumbered by the scribal authority. Rather they were willing and ready to hear "the message" anew. "Perhaps what is most surprising is the fact that it is Jesus' actions, designated as teaching, that underline the inadequacy of the scribal point of view for the author, and their lack of authority in the eyes of the populace."[10]

In like manner J. Draper perceives a bond of solidarity between the carpenter Jesus and the migrant day labourers or the landless poor. In all probability the workers of first-century Palestine were driven by circumstances into clusters of solidarity, instead of competing with one another. This means that Jesus, when he left the modest but secure profession of carpentry, brought with him a sense of solidarity into the insecure community of the dispossessed. More than that, he seems to have moved beyond a mere proclamation of solidarity with the destitute to an act of co-experiencing their wretchedness. Draper infers from an analysis of the parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16) that Jesus, on the other hand, passes judgment on the solidarity of the

rich in their exploitation of the poor. An assessment of the life and work of the wandering teacher thus has to reckon with the reality of his identification with the migrant Palestinian work-force and the poorest of the poor. "Certainly there was a theological underpinning to the hopes of the Jewish poor, but we would do injustice to the historical setting of the gospels if we do not see that real poverty and starvation lies behind the sayings of Jesus".[11] Does this mean that Jesus shared the same 'wrathful' vision of God's imminent reign as the village people? Scholars view the issue differently.

The first opinion can be categorized as an individualistic assessment of the kingdom. Howard Kee correctly locates the contours of the Galilean healer's *kerygma* within the social world of the New Testament. He also illuminates the eschatological spearhead of this teaching. But in his view Jesus prophesies that the divine punishment of the wicked will occur in the beyond. For the present the acceptance of God's kingdom means the personal reign of God in the lives of individuals. While its final *dénouement* would mark the end of all human history (including tyrannical rule), Jesus, in the meanwhile, "was concerned only with the moral and spiritual consequences of its coming." This implication is that he broke with the poor's expectations that God's reign had immediate political implications for the oppressive rulers.[12] Here the religious dimension is divorced from the political. Problematic for the argument is that this separation contradicts the Hebraic wholistic approach to life.

In contradiction to Kee's standpoint, Latin American scholars Gustavo Gutiérrez and Leonardo Boff claim that the hermeneutical key to under-

standing God's kingdom is to be found precisely in *the poor* (as a collective concept). Their basic thesis is that Jesus did not come to preach about himself, but about the divine reign. The ancient utopia of complete liberation, was presented as being realized in his person - a liberation that is not only spiritual, but also structural and eschatological. Gutiérrez argues that the main obstacle to the kingdom, hampering its growth, is sin. Seen from a Third World perspective, the latter is never "fleshless". It is evident in the structural exploitation of the poor.[13] The radical and historical liberation from or destruction of sinful structures, through the rebellion of the poor, does not amount to the coming of the kingdom itself (which is a gift), but nevertheless constitutes "a salvific event", a sign of "the growth of the kingdom". Seen in this sense the announcement of the divine kingdom posed a direct challenge to the Roman oppressors, because it attacked "the foundation of injustice and exploitation" which constituted Roman rule - and indeed Jewish vested interests.[14]

In the same vein Boff writes: the rule of God "calls into crises more immediate and regional interests, whether they be religious or political or social."[15] Here again its transformative significance for all human spheres is highlighted. The kingdom is described as a process that reaches its apex in the eschaton (cf. Gutiérrez's "growth"). Markan (1:15f.) and Lucan texts (17:21f.) are seen to stress its presence in Jesus who is "... the instrument of the concrete realization of the absolute meaning of the world: i.e., liberation *from* every stigma (including suffering, division, sin, and death) and liberation *for* real life, for open-ended communication of love, grace,and plenitude in God." [16]

The apocalyptic proclamation that the reign is at hand, implies a cancellation of all that sin means for human beings, society and even the cosmos. However, the pervasiveness and historic nature of sin poses a blasphemous challenge to the Christian's belief in God's sovereignty. Central therefore to liberation Christology is the view that a continuing repressive situation is "a slap in the face of God's sovereignty"; God being the Defender of the poor and the Avenger (*Go'el*) of the lowly.[17] From this perspective, and in the context of the late Second Temple era, the self-glorification of the Roman caesars underscored the domination of Yahweh's people in the holy land and the rejection of God's rule on earth. In brief, the reality of being oppressed by heathen rulers seemed to erode the belief in God's supreme rule. The proclaimed kingdom then, guaranteed the afflicted a special place - a preference that would be echoed by the Gospel's predilection for them (*ptóchoi euangelizontai*, Lk. 4:18).

The individualistic and apolitical reading of the announcement concerning God's reign, is equally rejected by R. Horsley, who argues that "we must become far more concrete than is our habit."[18] By this he means that the class conflict and violent situation which permeated first-century Palestine, resulting in the peasantry's state of penury, must be delineated. Besides the fact that Rome annexed countries by means of massive violence, it ironically enforced the *pax Romana* through the method of sustained "terror". Analysing the Josephan narratives extensively (especially *War* 2:274-76 and *Ant.* 20:206-14), he shows that the Herodians and the Judean priestly aristocracy shared in the violent subjugation of fellow-Jews. Though the responses of the populace to imperial rule varied, it is interesting to notice that "the three major

popular revolts (4 B.C.E., 66-73 C.E., and 132-35 C.E.) in each of the major outlying districts - Galilee, Perea, and Judea - all assumed the same social-religious form, that of a popular messianic movement."[19] The leader of such a movement was frequently acclaimed by his followers as an "anointed" king (messiah). The Jesus movement itself emerged at a time when the Jews launched nonviolent protests against procuratorial rule (note references to the reactions of Pilate's brutality in Chapter Three). Moreover, the mere fact that Jesus was crucified, a rebel accused of posing as an anointed king, indicates that he had been regarded as a threat to the *pax Romana*.[20]

Horsley defends the premise that Jesus' proclamation of God's rule should be located within the cadre of "the milieu of Jewish apocalypticism", without alienating the apocalyptic climate from history. He argues that the Galilean healer's perspective is specifically to be aligned with the many among the village people that the repressive situation was in the control of Satan. Horsley differs from Gutiérrez and Boff, namely that the preaching on "the kingdom" did not contain a reference to the *eschaton* (not even as the final consummation of a growth process). Rather, he posits that it solely focused on the present needs of the people. "The kingdom" was a "political metaphor", and so understood by his hearers. Concretely the existing ruling class was perceived as being the agents of Satan who would be uprooted by Yahweh's impending reign.

> ... Jesus shared the apparently widespread popular Palestinian Jewish perspective, attested in a variety of apocalyptic texts, that God was expected to effect the restoration of the people, which would include vindication of the suffering righteous and judgment of the unrighteous oppressors, domestic rulers, and alien imperial regime. [21]

A reconciled view of the previous two standpoints is proposed here: Whilst the promising *mysterium* of the "yet-to-be" dimension of God's reign is important for the poor and thus to be retained, its inauguration already means the politically concrete judgment and disposal of the tyrant. The impoverished people of the land understood well the symbols in which the "good news" were clothed; an apocalyptic realism that fanned social discontent, leading to Jesus' early death as a martyr. Against this religious and socio-political background, the saying in the Synoptic gospels on vengeance is evaluated. It forms part of the "Sermon on the Mount", which is perhaps the supreme paradigm of the preaching on God's reign. Commencing his ministry in a local synagogue (Nazareth's), the healer claimed that his message is prophetically determined. "Armed with the power of the Spirit" (*dunámei tou pneumatos*, Lk. 4:14), he read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah:

> The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
> because the LORD has anointed me
> to preach the good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted,
> to proclaim freedom for the captives
> and release from darkness for the prisoners;
> to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour
> and the vengeance of our God,
> to comfort all who mourn ...
> (Is. 61:1-2, NIV)

Jesus, according to the Lucan text, omits Yahweh's "Day of Vengeance" from his Scripture reading (Lk. 4:18-19). Had it been a deliberate rejection of that teaching as the so-called 'antitheses' of the Sermon on the Mount seem to suggest? (Mt. 5:21-48). In J. Carter Swaim's view wrathful acts against sinners are God's prerogative, not to be evoked by humans. Did Jesus close the book before reading the last line of the Isaiah pericope, because "this is a part of the old order that has dropped out"?[22] John Riches argues in even stronger terms that while there is continuity between Jesus' ethic and Jewish apocalyptic, we

should also stress the discontinuity. This discontinuity Riches perceives in Jesus' presentation of the popular idea of God's coming kingdom to the poor. He disencumbered its wrathful, militaristic and vindictive connotations and also rejected John the Baptist's announcement of the destructive power of the divine judgment. Rather, God rules through love, mercy and forgiveness and empowers the poor to do likewise.[23] The basic error in these constructs is theological. They suggest too rigidly that the God of the Hebrew Scriptures is primarily understood in terms of wrath and vengeance, whereas the God in Christ personifies love. However, different images of God surface in the Old Testament. Instead of hemming Jesus' announcement of the reign in an enclave of "mercy, love and forgiveness", we ought to examine which image concurs with his own.[24]

In the late Second Temple era, with its contra-realities of imperial oppression and Jewish protestation, the *lex talionis* as a human right was a burning issue, as well as the apocalyptic vision of an angry God. It is asserted here that Jesus' message was not a fundamental departure from conventional Jewish ethics, but rather in dialogue with it. Reading the 'inaugural sermon' out of context, that is, without determining its proper place in the overall teaching about the meaning of God's rule and Jesus' own position within Jewish society, is biblicism. Two factors have to be taken into account when his stance on vengeance is examined, namely 1. that as a leader of a "popular messianic movement" (and there is ample Scriptural evidence to suggest this) he maintained the apocalyptic teaching on God's wrath and judgment, and 2. that historically speaking Jewish ethics was his frame of reference.

In the third chapter we have elaborated on the Pharisaic, Sadducean and Essene pronouncements on "vengeance", in other words, the standpoints of Jewish associations who were contemporaneous with Jesus (see Mk. 7:3, 12:18; Mt. 15:2, 22:23; Lk. 20:27; Acts 23:8. Cf. *Ant.* 13:172, 18:11-19; *War* 2:119, 138-64; *Life* 10-12). Naturally Jesus, as a Jew, like the proponents of the various "philosophies", did not separate religious matters from the political and socio-economic processes. While the Pharisees regarded the on-going imperial situation as a clear sign that an apocalyptic hastening of the Day of Yahweh was impractical, the literalistic Sadducees' political conservatism can be ascribed to their being adherents of the collaborating priestly aristocracy. Though not pacifists *in toto*, the Essenes nevertheless believed that all things are to be left in the hands of God. The Gospel tradition particularly displays an interest in the relation between Jesus and the Pharisees. It would seem that the Pharisaic segregation from the "impure" ordinary people (*'am ha-aretz*) or "sinners" (*'amartolói*) has implications, considering Jesus' close association with them. J.D. Dunn's exposé of the Pharisees shows that they regarded themselves as trustees of the Torah and of the ancient traditions. It is likely that as a recognizable "sect", they would have criticized those whose ethic went against the grain of their own interpretations. Dunn, however, cautions that the Pharisaic antagonism toward the people of the land and their criticism of Jesus should not be inflated. He then offers a balanced view: it was "an *internal* Jewish dispute, a confrontation between Jewish factions."[25]

From the previous paragraphs it becomes apparent that in unravelling Jesus' teaching on vengeance, his Jewishness should be fully reckoned with. Jewish scholar Geza Vermes rightly stresses "Yeshu's" Galilean

background, and agrees with Dunn that the conflict between the charismatic healer and the Pharisees "resembled the in-fighting of factions belonging to the same religious body ..."[26] Vermes, situating Jesus' place within the age-long genre of "popular piety", identifies him as a Galilean *Hasid* (devoted and loving teacher). His powers of exorcism and healing established his reputation among the ordinary people as "the man of God" (*ish ha-elohim*)[27] Imitating the righteousness of Yahweh, the Galilean healer/exorcist expressed concern for the Torah's obligations. Vermes then uses the Jewish setting of the Gospels' main character to separate him from the later (that is, Pauline) "antinomianism of Gentile Christianity." In this he departs drastically from Dunn's exposition.[28] It is not, however, a matter to concern us here.

James Cone, in turn, reinterprets dialectically the Jewishness of Jesus in the social context of racial oppression. Black Christology affirms Jesus' historical presence with the poor of the land, arguing that as the Crucified but Risen Lord he is present today in the struggle for freedom. Only a docetic reading would deny the concreteness of God's predilection for the despised in Jesus of Nazareth. This means that Christ is black in a situation of racist exploitation.

> If we assume that the Risen Lord is truly present with us as defined by his past history and witnessed by Scripture and tradition, what then does his presence mean in the social context of white racism? If Jesus' presence is real and not docetic, is it not true that Christ *must* be black in order to remain faithful to the divine promise to bear the suffering of the poor? [29]

The *Sitz im Leben Jesu* and the above suggestion that his teaching was a reinterpretation of the Mosaic law, form the backdrop against which a closer look is now taken at the lexical context of the sayings relevant to our theme.

> You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'? But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you. If someone slaps you on the right cheek, let him slap your left cheek too. And if someone takes you to court to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well. And if one of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack one kilometre, carry it two kilometres ... You have heard that it was said, 'Love your friends, hate your enemies'. But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.
> (Mt. 5:38-44, Good News Bible; cf. Lk. 6:27-36)

The oscillations in New Testament scholarship become transparent as commentators make an effort to unravel Jesus' so-called 'antitheses'. For Francis Beare, Robert Guelich and Allen Verhey, the phrase "For I tell you ..." (*ego de lego hymin*) that opens the 'antitheses' discourse in verse 20, is proof that an unparalleled ethic is being expounded.[30] The *de* of Matthew (*But* I tell you ...) acquires in their interpretations an unusually strong accent. Yet, as Jewish scholar Pinchas Lapide points out, linguistically it does not constitute a deviation from the Torah. *Va ani omer lachem* was a normal phrase in dialectical rabbinic rhetoric: "You have heard" or "It is said" followed by "And I say to you."[31] A contextual exposition, such as Buttrick's, reckons with the fact that Jesus' faith was "fed from the Old Testament. It was in his blood and bone. He could not and would not disown it."[32] Consequently, Jesus proceeds to give six instances or illustrations (Mt. 5:21-48) of the way in which the law of his reign fulfils, but at the same time moves beyond, the Mosaic law. He declares explicitly: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them (*katalousai 'allà plērōsai*, Mt. 5:17). The superficiality of the antithetical argument becomes transparent when the very first instance is assessed:

> You have heard that it was said,
> 'Do not commit murder; anyone who
> does will be brought to trial?' But
> now I tell you: whoever is angry
> with his brother will be brought to
> trial ...
> (Mt. 5:21-22a, Good News Bible)

What the wandering teacher does, is to retain and then broaden the standard's meaning; in other words, he radicalizes the commandment. The primary purpose, namely prohibiting murder, is kept, but (*de*!) he additionally probes its hidden root.[33] He expects his disciples' righteousness (*dikaiosuné*) to surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees (Mt. 5:20). The sermon has therefore a strong ethical and pastoral thrust. There can be no doubt that what the teaching denotes "is not a righteousness that comes from God on the basis of the redemptive act of Jesus Christ, but a righteousness that must be produced by the disciples..."[34] My specific concern is Jesus' reinterpretation of the *lex talionis* or "law of the tooth", in the light of the reign of God and its righteousness (Ex. 21:23-25 is its fullest statement; the shorter versions are Lev. 24:19-20 and Deut. 19:21).

The *talion* principle, according to Walter Kaiser, is "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" or simply "life for life" (*Ophtalmon anti ophtalmou* and *odonta anti ondontos*). This instruction was given to the civil magistrates as a guideline in cases of civil dispute, impelling them to make the punishment fit the crime. It was the judges' responsibility to "make the restitution match the losses - no more or no less."[35] The *talion* principle urged exact restitution, or legal retaliation. At the same time it restrained blood-revenge; the extralegal "vengeance of the family feud."[36] In other words, it is wrong to talk simplistically of "the Jewish law of retaliation" which is supposedly in contradiction

with 'enemy love'. As soon as this is made the point of departure in appraising Jewish ethics, Jesus' explicit affirmation of the goodness of the Torah becomes a *contradictio in termini*. In the words of Dan Cohn-Sherbok:

> In the life and ministry of Jesus then, we can see the bonds that link him to his Jewish past ... The Hebrew prophets' experience was of a God so concerned with human social justice that he was compelled to pour his wrath on Israel for her infidelity to the Torah ... so too, Jesus condemned the leaders of the people for their hardheartedness, hypocrisy, and injustice. [37]

Jean Bastiaens, elaborating on the legal aspects of the *lex talionis*, points out that not only should its usage be traced in the Pentateuch, but also in the ancient Jewish commentaries: The Mekhilta, the Mishnah and the Gemara. The restitution demanded amounted to a monetary compensation or reparation. In every case, except premeditated murder, there had been a substitute or ransom (Ex. 21:13-14). Reparations were justified when the accused was held responsible for 1. the bodily harm caused; 2. physical pain endured; 3. the medical costs involved; 4. time lost in terms of labour, and 5. the humiliation suffered. The Torah and these commentaries detail the forms of punishment for they concentrate on the wrongdoer, the injurer, the aggressor. Mt. 5:21-48, or the entire Sermon on the Mount for that matter, is not an abrogation of those ancient laws, but an exposition of its further implications ("Jezus plaatst niet een alternatief tegenover een gangbare handelswijze").[38]

It is further shown by Bastiaens that Jesus looks at God's reign from the perspective of the wronged. What then should be the attitude of the injured, the sinned-against? "You have heard that it was said, 'Love

your friends, hate your enemies'. But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Mt. 5:43) Whether this hard saying indicates a fundamental departure from the Mosaic law, requires clarification.

To start with, the Hebrew Scripture does not contain a command that the enemy should be hated. Compare the injunction found in Proverbs: "If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you" (25:21-22, NIV. Also 20:22 and 24:28-29). Jesus' rejection of the current directive is obviously not a reference to the written law, but "what was being *said* in the oral law of the Jewish tradition in the first century A.D."[39] The legal standard that the injurer must offer reparations before a judge is kept. It is uncertain who is blamed here for the additional "... and hate your enemy" (*kai misēseis tòn 'echtrón sou*). The persons responsible probably made an extrapolation of Lev. 19:18, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbour as yourself."[40] But the New Testament, even while exhorting Christians to love and forgive the enemy, does not undermine their right to legal protection.[41] The wandering healer, true to his life of solidarity with the poor, focuses on *the humiliation suffered* by the injured (thus the fifth article of the *lex talionis*).[42] They must face the evildoer with courteous, disarming love instead of vengefulness. They must "turn the other cheek!"

John Stott is right in stating that Jesus of Nazareth here does not prohibit the judicial "principle of retribution", but rather the pursuit of personal revenge.[43] Contrary to the extrapolation of the biblical maxim

"love your neighbour (*plesion*)", the logion in the Synoptic gospels confirms his fidelity to authentic Judaic traditions. Guelich, severing the ties between Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries, arrives logically at an otherworldly conclusion: "You shall not seek legal vindication against an evil person ... As an apodictic command, the antithesis categorically prohibits legal retaliation against an offending party."[44] Here the Galilean healer is portrayed as being opposed to Jewish juridical practices. Guelich misses the point made. As defender and patron of the lowly, Jesus addresses the injured, which in this context are the people of the land. Their legitimate quest for compensatory justice may be so permeated with vindictiveness, that they would seek revenge and it is against this "natural spirit" that Jesus warns.[45] It is not the right to justice that is questioned, but the manner in which oppressed people ascertain it.

Finally, the identity of "the enemy" (*echthros*) or evildoer has to be established, for it could not have been a vague designation. The width of the term is discussed by W. Klassen who finds that it may designate a personal enemy or, at a national level, the enemies of Israel. Particularly the enemy mentioned in Mt. 5:43f. "is the one who is actively persecuting the church ..."[46] Klassen is mistaken in his Matthean exegesis because historically and sociologically, as we have seen, the wandering healer and his followers constituted a popular messianic movement - not yet "the church". Pursuing a concrete approach, Horsley bases his argument on the premise that the hearers addressed were the Galilean outcast, that is, those landless peasants who were the victims of the exploitative tax system. They were the ones, so caught up in the spiral of debt, that survival became a daily struggle. The community of the

poor, he argues, would naturally have been exposed to the temptation of defensive self-protection, which could result in "delecterious social effects." Matthew, Horsley suggests, wrongly rearranged the sayings source-material in such a way that the impression is left on the reader that the enemies whom the followers should love, were "outsiders" (for instance, the foreign Roman rulers). However, the instruction to "pray for those who persecute you", is omitted in the Lucan parallel. In the literary and social context the term "enemies" (*echthroi*) denotes anxious fellow-peasants who have yielded to the temptation of greed. The instruction to "love the enemies" had nothing to do with nonresistance or non-retaliation vis-à-vis the ruling class, but encouraged an egalitarian way of life (ethos) in the village community.

> These sayings of Jesus rather called people in local village communities to take economic responsibility for one another in their desperate circumstances. Those addressed may have had little or nothing themselves. But Jesus called upon them to share willingly, even with their enemies or those who hated them. [47]

The addressees were indeed the suffering village people. However, the oppressive Second Temple period was pregnant with the apocalyptic expectation that Yahweh would displace the existing ruling class, who were God's enemies and therefore the people's. While the concreteness of Horsley's explication deserves credit, the designation of "enemies" cannot be narrowed down to interpersonal relations in the local village community. The language of the kingdom or rule of God which forms the broader lexical context of the hard sayings, has clear political implications. The "enemies" are both the oppressors and aggressive fellow-peasants, that is, all who threaten the spiritual well-being and material existence of the poor. The latter should confront the evildoer without a spirit of revenge or resort to the primitive blood-feud.

Rather, without having to give up the right to legal protection, they must approach them with love and a readiness to forgive. Jewish scholar Lapide discovers in the Sermon on the Mount a "dual piece of advice" that embraces both love and righteousness, but "no demand that they should forego human dignity ... or their freedom of action".[48] If the tyrannical nature of the first-century religio-political regime in Palestine is fully taken into account, Jesus' instruction to the weak was pastorally sound and politically sensible.

In summation: Jesus' ethical references to the phenomenon of human vengeance in first-century Palestine occurred within the broader framework of his proclamation of God's coming reign. His bond of solidarity with the landless poor and migrant work-force ensured that those apocalyptic stories and symbols were understood by his hearers, namely, that God's impending judgment meant the concrete disposal of the heathen ruler and the unrighteously wealthy. Jesus' early political death as a martyr confirms this reading. Furthermore, the ethos expounded in the Sermon on the Mount was comparable to and in dialogue with Jewish ethics. Whilst the Galilean healer retained the human right of believers to juridical protection, that is, the *talion* principle, he also rejected wild justice in the form of the blood-revenge. The instruction to love the enemy does not constitute a demand to be passive in the face of oppression and racist exploitation, but relocates the pursuance of justice in the constructive and moral sphere. The apostle Paul also alludes to the themes of vengeance and enemy love, which makes a closer examination of this dimension of his theology imperative.

The Pauline Angle

> Bless those who persecute you;
> bless and do not curse.
> Do not repay anyone evil for evil.
> Be careful to do what is right
> in the eyes of everybody.
> If it is possible, as far as it
> depends on you, live at peace with
> everyone. Do not take revenge, my
> friends, but leave room for God's
> wrath,for it is written: "It is
> mine to avenge; I will repay, says
> the Lord."
> (Rom. 12:14, 17-19, NIV)

The text is an indication of how the apostle Paul applied the commandment of enemy love. Inevitably his understanding of the Christian community's place and responsibility in the world was shaped by the historical and social milieu of the first century. Early in the letter to the Roman Christians, written between 53 and 58 C.E., Paul expresses a desire to visit them (1:10-15), which in itself shows that the congregation was already well established (also 15:23, cf. Acts 18:2).[49] Apparently Christianity was then still regarded in the Graeco-Roman world as a heretical Jewish variant. Especially when reading chapters 12 and 13 of Paul's letter, one should keep in mind that the persecution of the Church by Rome had not begun yet.[50] E. Mary Smallwood points out that Roman policy allowed Jews in the diaspora, including Rome itself, the right to religious freedom, providing that no proselytizing occurred. Repression of the Jewish faith as such was nonexistent. Naturally individuals or groups ("sects") would be punished if perceived as threats to public order. When the Christian preachers arrived in the capital, probably during the second half of the fifth century, and focused their missionary zeal on Jews, they created disturbances and disorder.[51] Paul's exhortation to Christians to "bless those who persecute them" for vengeance is God's (Romans 12), should thus be read against the back-

ground of two related factors: 1. Christianity was still seen by the rulers as a component of Judaism and 2. Any individual though, causing the disruption of the *pax Romana*, would provoke the wrath of the imperial government.

The letter to the Roman Christians, as Victor Furnish makes clear, was composed at an early phase of Nero's reign (54-68 C.E.), "...when there was considerable confidence abroad that his administration would be just and humane. The Great Persecution of the church was still centuries off."[52] The first sign in the history of the Roman Christian community that they were identified and treated as a separate sect, appears later, namely Nero's specific action against them in 64 C.E. The classical historian, Tacitus, says that it is uncertain whether the conflagration was accidental or "treacherously contrived by the emperor", but in the end the Christians, who "hated mankind" (sic), were blamed. Tacitus argues that while the Christians deserved exemplary punishment, justice was not so much served, as Nero's own taste for cruelty. "Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired."[53] The apostle therefore admonished his readers to submit to the civil authorities at a time when they still received the same religious and legal protection as the Jews in the diaspora, despite the rising antagonism between them and the Jewish communities. It is against the positive reality of this social-political scene that Romans 13 should be examined. Immediately after the instruction not to seek revenge (quoted above in his "twelfth chapter"), Paul continues:

> Every person must submit to the supreme authorities. There is no authority but by act of God, and the existing authorities are instituted by him; consequently anyone who rebels against authority is resisting God's divine institution ... For government, a terror to crime, has no terror for good behaviour. You wish to have no fear of the authorities? Then continue to do right and you will have their approval, for they are God's agents working for your good. But if you are doing wrong, then you will have cause to fear them; it is not for nothing that they hold the power of the sword, for they are God's agents of punishment, for retribution on the offender ... That is also why you pay taxes.
>
> (Rom. 13:1-6, NEB)

An issue that needs to be addressed besides the social context of these exhortations, is their theological significance. Here Paul's theology carries a clear apocalyptic motif. The imminent expectation of Christ's second coming (*Näherwartung*) undoubtedly influenced his ethical thought. Christians were called upon to realize "how critical the moment is (*'eidótes tòn kairón*). It is time for you to wake out of sleep, for deliverance is nearer to us now than it was when we first believed" (*sōtēria 'ē 'óte 'episteúsamen*, Rom. 13:11). Moreover, the power of the coming reign is already present, and the faithful should live transformed lives in the light of its redeeming presence. But the experience of salvation or freedom must not be perverted. "... Paul emphasizes that the Christians' present life is radically qualified by the imminence of the New Age. He does not conclude from this, however, that those who in Christ belong to the New Age no longer have any responsibilities for the present age."[54]

The Kairos-theologians point out that "State Theology" cannot employ Rom. 13:1-7 in order to justify demands of absolute obedience to civil authorities. The teaching was a contextual, ethical admonition directed

to some Christians in Rome ('antinomians'), who mistook civil licentiousness for Christian freedom. Paul cautions that Christ's lordship does not mean the elimination of every form of authority or government. Rather, it is the tyrannical government that cannot claim moral or theological legitimacy, because it is "hostile towards the common good" (*hostis boni communis*).[55] The apostle does not prescribe rigid, timeless rules to be misused by intransigent regimes, but takes issue of existing antinomian attitudes.

In similar vein Halvor Moxnes concedes: "It is possible that Paul's main goal in this passage was to warn Christian enthusiasts who wanted their Christian freedom to spill over into civic life."[56] The position of the first Christians within Roman society should be taken into consideration. Moxnes asserts that the addressees found themselves in a given, stratified order wherein they were the subordinates. To give "honour" (*timēn*) to the authorities in the form of tithes and dues (*opheilas*), was normal in a "patron-client" situation, and would not contradict Christian convictions (13:6-7). Their missionary endeavours inevitably meant opposing the synagogues, but at the same time "the young Christian groups needed to find a way to function within Graeco-Roman society ..."[57] To summarize the Pauline view: the Christian community, while expecting Christ's imminent return, that is, God's Day of Judgment ("... I will repay"), must proclaim their newly-found freedom. However, Christian freedom cannot be equated with a blanket dismissal of civil order. Christians should submit themselves (*hypotassesthō*) by paying the taxes expected from all subordinates, and thus secure their position in the Hellenistic world.

From the perspective of the oppressed, the obvious question arises: Just how does God intend to bring vengeance on the oppressor? In order to assess Paul's standpoint we need to take the literary context of the letter to the Roman Christians into account, apart from the social milieu and theological content. A fundamentalist reading of the relevant texts could distort their meaning beyond recognition. An instance of this type of exegesis is the following:

> "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:19-21). What does this short paragraph mean? It means that we are not to retaliate against wrongs done to ourselves, but that we are to step aside and let the wrath of man work (sic), even to our harm. If you should be saying, "But they will do me harm", the answer is "vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord". In other words, God says that if we live as He intends us to live, the wrath of man will come, but when it comes He Himself promises to protect our interests. He may protect them here. We may not see how they are protected until we get to heaven, and there those who have lived as Christ lived shall be vindicated in the presence of the universe. [58]

This 'pie in the sky when you die' type of theology obscures the Pauline pronouncement that "the moment is critical" (13:11). Even within the existing realm of tension established by the coming *parousia*, the vindication of the wronged is not shunned, but taken seriously. Considering the immediate literary framework, Winsome Munro uncovers the basic layers in Romans 12 and 13. These chapters cohere thematically without difficulty. The thread of Paul's argument is the theme of love (Rom. 12:9, 13:10), which refers not only to interpersonal relations within the local community, but embraces society in its entirety. The apostle seems to have created a paradox, for in the first stratum the Christian community is told that vengeance or the punishment of evil, is God's sole prerogative. In the latter the prerogative is extended to human

beings. "At first sight this is contradictory, but so closely does the latter stratum associate authority with the divine that there is probably no dichotomy between judgment by human and divine authority in its thought."[59] The fact that Paul himself, when his conflict with the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem led to imprisonment, appealed to Nero to be tried in Rome, affirms that Christians should not forego the protection afforded by legal justice.[60]

The linkage between Rom. 12:19 ("Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath ...") and Rom. 13:4 ("... for they are God's agents for punishment, for retribution on the offender") is obvious. The civil authorities become God's avenger, bringing his/her wrath on the transgressor in the temporary space created by the eschatological tension. The breaking-in of God's rule not only entails mercy, compassion and love but also justice and judgment. They too receive a "dual piece of instruction", namely, to do good as God's servant (*leitourgos* and *diakonos*) and to punish as God's nemesis (*ekdikos*). Vengeance is hereby removed from the personal to the legal sphere where, Paul supposes, the emotional entanglement is resolved. It becomes clear that the apostle does not postpone the vindication of God's angry children to some exclusively future, heavenly realm. However, the government can only be God's agent of wrath, if it serves the good of humankind. It may lose this divinely sanctioned position.

The question is what the Pauline argument means concretely in our context. During the latter half of the 1980s the illegitimacy of the minority government of South Africa came strongly to the fore, both nationally and internationally.[61] They were illegitimate not only from a

black historical perspective, but also morally and theologically. The Kairos-theologians expressed it in the following manner:

> ... the majority of the people of South Africa think (that) the apartheid regime is indeed the enemy of the people and that is precisely what they call it: the enemy. In the present crisis, more than ever before, the regime has lost any legitimacy that it might have had in the eyes of the people. [62]

The theological issue arising out of such a situation is whether God raises substitutionary *ekdikoi* to "crush the oppressor" (Psalm 72) and "defend the rights of the poor ... rescuing them from the power of the wicked" (Psalm 82). The history of ancient Israel reveals a God who found it necessary at times to make use of even non-Israelites to be his/her *ekdikoi*:

> The Assyrian! He is the rod that I wield
> in my anger,
> and the staff of my wrath is in his hand.
> I send him against a godless nation,
> I bid him march against a people -
> who rouse my wrath,
> to spoil and plunder at will
> and trample them down like mud in the streets.
> (Is. 10:5-6, NEB)

Calvin's successor, Theodore Beza, found himself compelled to grapple with this issue in his own time. In the wake of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Night, ordered in 1572 by the French king, he published his statement *De Jure Magistratuum* anonymously. The main thrust of Beza's little book centres around the right of Christian believers (more specifically the French Huguenots') to resist tyrannical rule. In practical political terms the reformer sought to restore a "balance of power" in a context where the power of the monarch had assumed absolutistic proportions.[63] He laid down a basic ethical principle that legitimate rulers who govern justly, must be obeyed. The question, how-

ever, arose whether "manifest tyranny can lawfully be checked by armed force". Whilst Beza forbade private persons to take up the sword against the king who had degenerated into a tyrant, he identified those whose duty it was to represent the people, namely, the intermediate or subordinate magistrates (*magistratus populares*).

> Would it not be just according to all law, divine and human, that by reason of the oath taken by them to ensure the observance of the laws, somewhat greater (liberty of action) should be granted to these subordinate magistrates than to those (citizens) who are of entirely private station and without any public office? I therefore maintain that, if they are reduced to such unavoidable compulsion, they are certainly bound, even by means of armed force if they can, to protect against manifest tyranny the safety of those who have been entrusted to their care and honour ... [64]

It is suggested by Villa-Vicencio that the function of those medieval magistrates to rebel against tyrannical rule, can be adopted by the poor and oppressed themselves in extreme circumstances i.e. by taking up the sword. From their perspective an armed revolutionary struggle might be justified as a last resort when nonviolent strategies are denied. "It is a theology which challenges Christians to ask which form of violence is less evil: violence as a means of oppression or violence employed as a counter-strategy of liberation?"[65]

If it is assumed that 'the sword' means the legitimate use of force to keep evil in check (Rom. 13:4), then its use by an illegitimate state becomes profoundly problematic as Gabriel Setiloane's reflections on Romans 13 and Revelation 13 make clear:

> Meanwhile, the third-world black side, which suffers under the sharpness and heaviness of that tyrannical sword, will find it not enough to pray for its downfall, but in the name of God and his righteousness will seek to strike a blow that will destroy it. [66]

In the light of the moral and theological illegitimacy of the National Party government, black Christians ought to take the risk of discerning where, when and by whom God's wrath was represented in our context. In Part One the theoretical difference between human vengeance as a destructive force (*wraak*) and it being a legitimate form of struggle (*vergelding*) is illustrated. In the Black history of resistance the attempt of Batjoe during the eighteenth century to destroy Cape Town is an example of the former. It could be argued, on the other hand, that while African Nationalism and Black Consciousness were historical expressions of social-political rage, their wrathfulness was controlled to a large extent. This historical ambiguity of human vengeance complicates the theological task of identifying God's substitutionary nemeses in the black struggle against colonial and neocolonial oppression.

We contend that in so far as Umkhonto we Sizwe had cast their struggle in the mould of sabotage (violence against property rather than people), its method could be described as humanitarian. There has to be room, Zolile Mbali argues, for moral choices even within the option of violence.[67] The deliberate assassination of whites by Pogo, on the other hand, makes pure revenge a likely motive. Leaving the details of these events aside, when the two acts are viewed symbolically, the above theological discussion is historically grounded. The handling of domestic

and neighbourhood affairs by the people's courts not only constituted a form of protest against the apartheid courts of law, but theologically they represented a possibility of being the "staff" of God's wrath (Is. 10:5). However, the 'necklacing' of persons perceived to be collaborationists, is in conflict with the biblical and traditional African value of the reverence of life. In view of the Pauline argument that tyrannical regimes lose their divinely instituted position of being God's servants, it is entirely conceivable that Umkhonto could have fulfilled the role of being God's surrogate-agent of wrath - even unwittingly.

BETWEEN CHEAP GRACE AND THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

> I was prepared for the poverty.
> I was prepared for the racism;
> and I was prepared for the
> political conditions. But nothing
> could have prepared me for the
> shocking abuses of children in
> South Africa.
> - American lawyer Ms Dayle E. Powell

Thus far we have seen that the exhortation to 'love the enemy' does not mean that Christians could not rely on retaliation when wronged. In brief, it is simply argued that it ought to be administered in an orderly and (under normal circumstances) a legal manner. While the Judaic *talion* principle is therefore retained, the way in which the faithful seek justice, must be free from vindictive desires. It is maintained here that as soon as Jesus' enemy love is divorced from his apocalyptic announcement of God's reign and his affirmation and re-interpretation of the Torah, his ethic is distorted. Paul, likewise standing within that tradition, explains how the oppressed are to be avenged, namely by the civil authorities, God's *ekdikoi*. In both cases their ethical thought emerged within and was influenced by a specific social-historical context. That black people are angry and even bitter at being victimized

for centuries, is understandable from their social-historical perspective. My contention remains that God's anger at oppression is resolved when the poor's anger at their state of penury is resolved. In his autobiography, titled *Kaffir Boy*, Mark Mathabane reflects on his childhood in Alexandra township (near Johannesburg):

> When I was growing up in Alexandra it meant hate, bitterness, hunger, pain, terror, violence, fear, dashed hopes and dreams. Today it still means the same for millions of black children who are trapped in the ghettos of South Africa, in a lingering nightmare of a racial system that in many respects resemble Nazism. In the ghettos black children fight for survival from the moment they are born. They take to hating and fearing the police, soldiers and authorities as a baby takes to its mother's breast. [68]

In the paragraph on the Pauline view on wrath and vengeance it is argued that in a situation where the divinely instituted *ekdikoi* themselves are morally corrupt and theologically illegitimate, God can erect surrogate-agents of wrath. However, if there is indeed this correlation between God's wrathfulness and human vengeance, what is the relation between divine grace (*charis*) and human graciousness? At this juncture then, a difficult ethical question must be posed, namely, whether forgiveness, which is the fruit of enemy love, cancels punishment.

The problem, as T. Matura correctly points out, is that the synoptic evangelists themselves are uncertain on this issue. In the Matthean presentation unconditional and unlimited forgiveness emerges as "the inexhaustible demand."[69] (Cf. Mt. 18:15-22). The evangelist Luke's simple logion, on the other hand, posits that: "If others wrong you, reprove them, and if they repent, forgive them" (*apolûo*, Lk. 17:36). Here the pardon presupposes the repentance (*metanoia*) of the injurer

(also 17:4). According to T. Manson Mark's gospel contains an admonition that makes the cultivation of a forgiving spirit the condition of receiving God's forgiveness. "Here the thought is in process of being legalised. If you do this, God will do that. It is *quid pro quo*."[70]

Sin (that needs to be forgiven by both God and the sinned-against) does not only occur on the individual plane. T. Cullinan stresses that the individual is not the only recipient of the divine grace, but also the corporate whole. The reality of collective guilt and sin too is revealed in the realm of redemption. We have to cope with "an awareness of corporate sin - an awareness which alone can call to corporate *'metanoia'*, the pre-condition of redemption."[71] It is suggested here that the remission of sins is costly both at the personal, subjective level and in the socio-political context of oppression. Black people should be called upon to forgive, but this act of political grace depends on their oppressors' willingness to right historical wrongs. An ethic of vengeance combats the spirit of revenge and unforgivingness as well as a glib ideology of "forgive and forget."

The current South African debate on amnesty for political criminals is a case in point. Various political organisations and religious bodies take different views on the issue. While the National Party government favours legislation which would ensure general pardon, the Western Province Council of Churches (WPCC) and the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC), in statements released in 1992, point out on theological grounds that the perpetrators of evil cannot simply claim forgiveness. Within our context, the Council argues, general amnesty is based on false ethical grounds. "Experience in other parts of the world

shows that true reconciliation and healing do not take place as long as suspicion and doubt prevail, or the possibility persists for the perpetrators to continue their evil deeds from positions of influence and power".[72] It is in this sense, J. Lucas reasons, that we have to avoid both a "soft doctrine of forgiveness" as easy-going indifference, and "too tough a doctrine of forgiveness." Some actions are just too serious and too damaging to be easily forgiven and forgotten. While wrongdoers cannot undo their unjust deeds, they should attempt to make good the damage done, even if compensation is often "woefully inadequate."

> Not all wrongdoing is unimportant, and we miss the urgency and immediacy of Christ's teaching if we make out that nothing other people do ever matters, and that we should never mind what they have done but always be ready to let bygones be bygones. [73]

The costly grace of the children of God, from a Christian point of view, is based on the costly grace of the Son. Forgiveness cannot be reduced to a cheap religious commodity, neither can it function as a substitute for the Reign's justice. This is the reason why, for example, the Kairos-theologians could not and did not dispense with the biblical maxim of forgiveness, the product of enemy love. What they did was to point out that no genuine forgiveness was possible without repentance, and no genuine peace and reconciliation in South Africa without justice. For them repentance and justice meant "the total dismantling of apartheid."[74] The limitation to this latter requirement is that it leaves the backlog of black people intact; a backlog tied up with the colonial and neocolonial history of dispossession, as well as the safety of those who were responsible for that deprivation.

Certainly the most significant confession of corporate guilt that chal-

lenges the very idea of an 'ethic of vengeance', ensued from the white Dutch Reformed Church (NGK). It already happened in Reformed circles at Vereeniging during March 1989, but more profoundly in ecumenical circles at Rustenburg in November 1990. The confession of Prof. Willie Jonker on November 6, later officially endorsed by the delegation and the church, occurred at two tangent planes, namely, the personal ("my own sin and guilt of the injustice") and the institutional: "We confess our sin and acknowledge our heretical part in the policy of apartheid which has led to such extreme suffering. We denounce apartheid in its intention, its implementation, and its consequences as an evil policy."[75] Beyers Naudé suggested at the Rustenburg Conference that the NG Kerk should confess its contribution to the establishment of apartheid publicly at 'Blood River' or the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria. What was necessary, he argued, was that the confession by the NGK be heard and received by the widest possible representation from the black community.[76] However, what is lacking, is not another public confession. That phase, although important then, must now be translated into action. Confession, repentance and forgiving are interconnected redemptive 'moments'. In the context of political oppression it means that repentance (*metanoia*) always acquires a socially concrete nature: the amelioration of the conditions of the poor. The latter's graciousness can (theologically 'must') only be a response to the oppressor's *restitutive actions*. Aelred Stubbs' reminiscences of the death of Biko also bring up the matter of ethical priorities: "I personally cannot pray for the forgiveness of those responsible for his death. I can and do pray for their repentance, which will then make possible and efficacious their forgiveness."[77]

The point made here is that while the sincerity of Jonker and his church has to be accepted, the confession remains incomplete. The NGK allowed an unbiblical gap or schism between verbal confessions of guilt and the pursuance of the righteousness of God's reign. The grace extended by the wretched of the earth to their oppressors is of necessity costly. Between indifferent cheap grace and the tempting laws of the jungle the victims of apartheid will have to carve out an option that will enkindle the depth and seriousness of political forgiving. It is thus a question of locating the component of forgiveness correctly within the healing process - a positioning that can only be done from below, by the poor themselves.

In recognising this, it is equally important to notice that the poor are not exclusively Christian. Indeed the populace of the nation within which the drama of forgiveness is to be acted out, is one of religious pluralism. In recognition of this reality, a national inter-faith conference, held in November 1992 under the auspices of the South African Chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace, adopted a declaration wherein the freedom, rights and responsibilities of all religious communities are entrenched.[78] For this reason an ethic of vengeance which reaches beyond Christian theology is necessary. In what follows certain pointers in this direction are given. Non-theological insights, such as the Kantian retributive theory of punishment, the utilitarian analysis or Hegel's views on the *jus talionis* principle, also warrant attention.[79] These final paragraphs then, are tentative steps toward a fuller understanding of the linkage between divine anger, human vengeance and social transformation.

For the sake of clarity it is useful to re-emphasize the goal of this thesis. It is to identify, from a black theological point of view, the correlation between divine and human vengeance. Third World conditions of poverty, oppression and human brokenness elicit the wrath of God and the rage of the oppressed. It is argued here that the resolvement of both expressions of anger can only occur via a fundamental and comprehensive (in the sense of truly ecumenical) redress of those conditions. Part One underlines the fact that critical contextual theology demands a serious encounter with history. Part Two underlines the need to discover theological-ethical insights from believers who, in different contexts and at different times, had already wrestled with this moral dilemma.

In the first section of this part certain theological notions such as love, mercy and forgiveness that seem to contradict *a priori* an 'ethic of vengeance', were scrutinized in the light of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Attention is now given to the on-going negative expressions of political vengeance which must and can be rechannelled in a constructive programme that enhances the following: 1. Punitive justice 2. The vindication of God's name and honour 3. Corrective justice 4. Compensatory justice and 5. Redemptive justice. These variants are approached from an Islamic, Jewish and lastly a Christian theological perspective. Illustrations from African traditional religions are also employed to augment this material. In so doing, it is imperative to recognise that in order to arrive ultimately at an open, just and democratic society, the past and existent crimes against humanity should first be dealt with.

1. Punitive Justice

Tell me when I have to go, Dr. Koornhof,
then I'll dig my grave -
and ask the police to shoot me,
like they did my husband.
- Mrs. Saul Mkizwe, April 1983

While the natural reaction by victimized people is the punitive response, it is asserted here that the ethical maxim that corresponds to the quest for punitive justice, is *retribution*. This argument is developed in what follows at an inter-faith level.

Islam, C. Glassé observes, has objectified the punishment of wrong-doers by laying down the principle of *qisās*, eliminating the subjective sense of revenge. "Where a life is lost and the victim and perpetrator are of equal status, the death of the perpetrator is an expiation for the death of the victim."[80] Sūra 5:45 gives a clue to the Qur'ānic view on punitive justice: "... that life is for life, and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for wounds retaliation (*qisās*)." According to Islamic law then, a murderer is to be executed. Besides the responsibility of the judges to ascertain this legal retaliation, the necessity of self-defence is recognised in grievous circumstances.

An etymological study of the Qur'ānic concept of retaliation has been done by Carlton Riemer. The fundamental concern of the Qur'ān is the preservation and protection of life. Forgiveness and mercy are accentuated, but retaliation (*qisās*) is allowable (for example Sūra 42:38/40-41/43). In the case of murder, retaliation is commanded to believers in Sūra 2:173/178, but in the same breath the idea of forgiveness is mentioned. The individual has to determine which avenue to pursue in

the given circumstances. If the course of retaliation is taken, it is to be equal and in kind. "Ultimately it is for the Moslems themselves to apply the principles set forth in the Qur'ān to the situation as it obtains in their respective ethnic and cultural groups today."[81] The call for peace (*Sālām*), Ibrahim Shalaby contends, is the divine injunction for all Muslims. That is the point of departure. The offensive war is categorically prohibited, but Muslims have to fight back their oppressors and are "ordered by the Qur'ān to retaliate in equal intensity".[82]

As in case of Christianity and Judaism, there are different trends within Islam. It must be kept in mind that Malcolm X had served twelve years in Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam and that he discovered orthodox Islam only a short while prior to his death in 1965. In that particular context he claimed the Islamic heritage and, simultaneously, gave expression to a dimension within Islam that is frequently overlooked. It should be stressed that Malcolm was a deviant, yet his ethical choices were in continuity with a marginalised Islamic trend. His ethics emerged within and was designed specifically for the black American urban context, and cannot be regarded as representative of mainstream Islam. Malcolm X never declared a 'holy riot' or ghetto war, but he could and did base the right of self-defence on the Islamic teaching of *qisās*, especially in situations where the personal safety of black people was threatened. This is the significance of his observation that the "hunted" can become the "hunter".[83] Malcolm X rightly taught that while aggressive war was un-Islamic, the Qur'ān did acknowledge the right of self-defence.

> There is nothing in our book, the Qur'ān, that teaches us to suffer peacefully. Our religion

> teaches us to be intelligent. Be peaceful, be courteous, obey the law, respect everyone; but if someone puts his hand on you, send him to the cemetery. That's a good religion ... And nobody resents that kind of religion being taught but a wolf, who intends to make you his meal. [84]

The first-century Zealotic option to administer retribution, is equally marginalised in dominant Jewish ethical reflection. Being the victims of repressive religious rule and alien Roman domination, their "purging" of certain prominent figures mirrors deliberate punitive action rather than indiscriminate revenge. It would seem that their violent effort to create a new dispensation (i.e. by means of the seizure of the Temple of Jerusalem), was made dependent upon the punishment of the illegitimate rulers.

In modern times the moral dilemma of the relation between forgiveness and retributive justice and the Torah's demand of forgiveness (e.g. Gen. 50:17; Lev. 5:6-10), is illustrated by the continued hunting of Nazi criminals. To be sure, the Israelis know well that the incarceration of an Eichmann or a Hess cannot be taken as satisfaction for six million Jews killed in the gas chambers of Treblinka, Belsen, Maidanek and Auschwitz. Should the Jews not be asked to forget the trauma of the Holocaust? Should former SS officer Alois Brunner, henchman of Eichmann, who still lives in Damascus, Syria, not be 'forgiven' so that he can 'die in peace'? Paul Marshall, in his treatment of the link between theological and juridical ethics, coins the phrase: "the priority of justice." Arguing that the "rank brutality (of the Nazis) cried out for a just retribution", he concludes that events such as the Nuremberg Trials "...still reveal that an idea of justice which transcends the will of majorities, or even the constitution laws of states, is vital to the

preservation of real human freedoms."[85] Kader Asmal is therefore right in weighing the possibility of applying the Nuremberg Principles to South Africa.[86]

The central issue emerging from the Islamic and Jewish illustrations, is that of accountability. A theological ethic of vengeance and wrathfulness cannot be built on a distorted notion of forgiveness in which the tie between punitive justice and the goal of reconciliation is severed. Rather, it should take cognizance of factual occurrences relating to the problem of accountability and the living experiences of the victims of political crime. Don Foster's research provided strong evidence of widespread practices of torture in South Africa. It also uncovered a pattern of severe psychological sequelae in both victims and their children following imprisonment and torture.[87] Lelyveld found a paradoxical feature in the South African law system, namely, an interplay between the abuse of power and the retention of traditional judicial forms.

> The security police are given effective carte blanche, then regularly made to answer for their use of it in open court; this usually requires lying on a colossal scale so the government and its supporters can have clear consciences. [88]

In Dullah Omar's view this exercise of arbitrary power and dictatorial rule amounts to state lawlessness.[89] Dissecting the "pyramid" of illegal acts against anti-apartheid activists which includes assassinations and disappearances, Steytler declares that "the weight of the evidence is such that the existence of a specialized death squad within the police force cannot be refuted easily ."[90] How can the church ask the family of the victims - the Mxenges, the Goniwes and Calatas - simply to forgive and forget? Alternately, does forgiveness mean that former death squad commander Dirk Coetzee who confessed his guilt, should not

be put on trial?

Keeping the debate on general amnesty in mind, it is clear that the relation between personal accountability and punitive justice is a burning issue. While the latter is the responsibility of the state, the situation becomes acute when state lawlessness is the order of the day. Should the victims take the law into their own hands or resort to courts of law? This is precisely the position many South African black people find themselves in. Since the unbanning of the ANC, the PAC, the BCM and 33 other anti-apartheid organisations on 2 February 1990, there has been an upsurge of white vigilantism and right-wing militancy. Groups like the "Afrikaner-Weerstandsbeweging" (Afrikaner Resistance Movement or AWB), the "Wit Wolwe" (White Wolves), "Blanke Beskermingsburo" (BBB), Order of Death, "Wêreld-Apartheidsbeweging" (Universal Apartheid Movement), European Cultural Association (ECA), "Kerk van die Skepper" (Church of the Creator) and "Die Ystergarde" (Iron Guard) threaten with a white backlash when majority rule becomes a reality.[91] Afrikaner-Weerstandsbeweging leader Eugene Terre'Blanche promised: "The AWB, representing the *Boer volk*, will never accept a communist ANC government in South Africa. If my government capitulates ... that night we will start war."[92] If the South African government proves unable to protect black family life or unwilling to ban these white hate-groups, then retaliation in such a context ceases to be an academic topic for discussion.

The point made here is that at a more profound level and in a post-apartheid era, an ethic of vengeance will also have to concern itself with 1. the vindication of the victims of South African Ku Klux Klanism

and 2. a refocusing on the problem of personal accountability. What does this mean ethically? From a Christian point of view the focus must remain on the restoration of broken human relationships and the transformation of society. An ethic of vengeance is essentially a pastoral concern which means that the healing process cannot take place if political criminals remain impenitent.

The quest for punitive justice is an indication of the complexity of the relation between theological and juridical ethics. Dutch theologian Herman Wiersinga correctly argues that forgiveness is not merely an emotional happening, but presupposes a liberating though painful confrontation with 'the other'. The confession of collective guilt cannot occur privately ("geen vergeving achter hun ruggen om"). Even though I disagree with Wiersinga's conclusion that in the Bible the motif of retribution becomes obsolete, he does illustrate the complex relation between theological and juridical ethics. He rightly points out that satisfaction can never be attained for lives lost especially in situations where commensurate punishment is simply impossible (compare the magnitude of Nazi crimes). Wiersinga also argues that the corporate guilt of a nation which perpetuates monstrosities, renders the isolation of individuals virtually impossible.[93]

One has to grant that these are very real problems. It is true that retribution can never compensate for the losses suffered by blacks in this country; not only lives but also in terms of opportunities and education. The issue concerning personal accountability is equally difficult. During the Middle Ages, for example, a Catholic scholar offered an apologia regarding the demoralisation of the church. He suggests

that it had been not so much the personal fault of the popes, who were often worthy clerics, as the outcome of the system of the papal court and bureaucracy "which even the Pope could not change."[94]

It should be stated above all that punishment, in its essence and if justly executed, is not synonymous to maltreatment or wild justice. In fact the good, says the apostle Paul, do not have to fear the morally legitimate government (Rom. 13:3). "But if you do evil, then be afraid of him, because his power to punish is real" (v.4). It was particularly this pericope that prompted Thomas Müntzer to endorse the peasants' call of *Göttliche Recht* (divine justice) during their revolt (1524-26). His dialectical reading of Rom. 13:1-7 led him to believe that the German princes had lost the divine power to rule. For Müntzer it was inconceivable that the Spirit would not inspire the elect to punish the godless. Retribution was thus primarily a theological endeavour. In the South African context it is equally inconceivable that the history of police brutality, assassinations and death squad activities should be simply forgiven and forgotten. What is ethically at stake is not reconciliation *an sich*, but the choice the victims have to make between cheap grace and genuine peace.

The decision of Dietrich Bonhoeffer during the 1930s to join an underground resistance movement dedicated to make an attempt on Hitler's life, vividly brings the question of personal accountability to the fore.[95] He disclosed that while it is not the task of the church to exert direct political action, it sometimes has to "put a spoke in the wheel itself".[96] The implication of his commitment is that individuals in powerful positions are not 'victims' of a tyrannical system but its

deliberate perpetrators.

Tillich, also grappling with the issues of accountability and the moral guilt of a nation, remarks that it is never the nation in its entirety which is directly guilty for what is done by the nation. It is always the ruling group. "Not many individuals in Germany are directly guilty of Nazi atrocities."[97] To dislodge justice from the healing process, replacing it with forgiveness, is to reduce the latter to a mere tool for manipulation. A legitimate government, God's *ekdikos*, should make the PW Bothas, the Magnus Malans and the Adriaan Vloks, take responsibility for the long black experience of suffering and genocide. "Scapegoats in the form of low-ranking officers will no doubt be found, but is it clear that the top ranks of the military and police have been party to the illegal campaign of assassinations."[98] An indication of this was the investigation led by SADF Chief of Staff, General Pierre Steyn, into the activities of a secret military unit called the Directorate of Covert Collection. It resulted in a purge of Military Intelligence officers by State President De Klerk just before Christmas 1992. While the sacking may seem ethical, it is actually a weak substitute for the legitimate quest for punitive justice. Instead of letting these officers take responsibility for their crimes in a court of law, they were simply dismissed.[99] Political crimes in South Africa were committed under the auspices of a regime that projected an image which enhanced the ideals of so-called Christian Western Civilization. Closely linked to retributive acts against the perpetrators, is the necessity that their misuse of the name of God should be avenged.

2. The Vindication of God's Name and Honour

> Allāh - there is no God but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist. Slumber overtakes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is behind them. And they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Great.
> - The Holy Qur'ān, Sūra 2:255

We have noted the pre-eminence that the notion of justice acquires in the theology of Malcolm X. Stemming from the strictness of Allāh's justice, is the apocalyptic hope that the "white devil-race" would soon be destroyed. Malcolm also reinterpreted natural disasters and calamities in the USA to be divine, wrathful visitations on the oppressor. This view, of course, is not representative of mainstream Islam, but Malcolm does represent an Islamic voice in the specific context of Black Consciousness. It should be remembered that he was under pressure from both younger Black Muslims in the Nation of Islam and nonviolent activists to galvanise direct action against the white oppressors. Elijah Muhammad, though, insisted that vengeance is God's sole prerogative, which left Malcolm only with the option of perceiving in disasters the judgment of Allāh. He linked the end of evil regimes causally to their evil history and prophesied:

> White America is doomed! ... Search even the histories of other nations that sat in the same positions of wealth, power and authority that these white Americans now hold ... and see what *God* did to them. If God's unchanging laws of justice caught up with every one of the slave empires of the past, how dare you think White America can escape the harvest of unjust seeds planted by her white forefathers against our black forefathers here in this land of slavery! [100]

Daud Rahbar confirms that "the pivot-idea" in the Qur'ān is God's stern justice of the Judgment Day, an attribute which should not be confused with tyrannical caprice.[101] However, the wrath of God (*ghadab*) is not confined to the Final Hour (*al-sā'a*) or the End (*Al-ākhira*), when the unbelievers will meet God's displeasure and alienation (*sakht*) as their ultimate punishment. Famines and misfortunes could already be discerned as historical or "portent" signs of the divine *ghadab* against evildoers (compare S.13:31: "And as for those who disbelieve, disaster will not cease to afflict them because of what they do, or it will alight close by their abodes until the promise of Allāh come to pass"). Thus, while God's honour will be fully avenged in the Day of Judgment, divine punishment already befalls corrupt peoples and nations in history. The forms of vice that can cause a nation to perish may be numerous including idolatry, but especially "economic oppression and exploitation of the poor; or political and social oppression of the poor and subject classes, in which case eventually 'the inheritance of the earth' comes to the weak and the oppressed ..."[102]

The prophet Muḥammad's resolve to vindicate God's name had to do with the religious and socio-political factors operative in pre-Islamic Arabia. While it is accepted here that the Qur'ān is a sacred Scripture, a revelation divinely inspired just as the Bible is *theopneust* (Sūra 53:1-18; 2 Tim. 3:16), it is difficult to understand its message without taking its *Umwelt* into consideration. Holt, Lambton and Lewis sketch a religious "struggle for Arabia" that gained momentum from the fourth to the seventh centuries. Already after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., Judaism's interest in the Arabian peninsula soared. Within the Red Sea area the elevation of Christianity in nearby Byzantium and Ethiopia

to the position of State religion, generated missionary zeal to christianize Arabia too, especially the south. Violent clashes between these two monotheistic faiths ensued, rendering the sixth century a period of anarchy and political upheavals. "In this sense the history of the south, which as an independent region was brought to an inglorious and almost pathetic end in the sixth century, became a *Praeparatio Arabica* or *Islamica*."[103]

Mecca itself, the caravan-city of western Arabia and the birthplace of Muhammad (born 570 C.E.), was not free from "the bewildering variety of religious currents."[104] Situated half-way between Yathrib (the stronghold of Judaism) and Najrān (the stronghold of Christianity), it became a confluence of the two religions. However, their monotheistic ideas had to co-exist alongside the Arabic traditions of idolatry and polytheism. Gradually Mecca acquired during the sixth century a character of being a `holy city' with sacred places: the Haram (sacred precinct or space), the Ka`aba (the cube) and the `Arafāt, the Holy Mountain of the pilgrimage. To a certain degree the symbiosis demonstrated a pursuit of Arabian unity, but it was still "syncretistic and uninspiring" until Arabia became "the Cradle of Islam."[105] Commencing his career as the messenger of God (*rasūl Allāh*) in about 610, Muḥammad retold his visions to a growing number of followers. These early revelations were closely related to the concrete situation in Mecca. Besides the unsatisfactory syncretism developed by the "people of the Book", the nomadic Arabs had believed that human history was subjected to an impersonal Fate or Time. Also, the competitive nature of the commerce cultivated individualism. In fact, the unscrupulous great merchants replaced the traditional value of solidarity within the

nomadic community with a refusal to share the wealth with the poor. The Qur'ān, whose sacred language is *al-'arabiyya*, therefore combats both the religious symbiosis and the class conflict engendered by the merchants' materialism. Muḥammad, whose movement naturally evoked the hostility of the rich, began to warn them about the Last Day of Judgment, because capital itself had become an idol. God is the Loving and the Merciful, but also the Judge (*al-Hakam*); the Avenger (*al-Muntaqim* - see e.g. 40:48 and 30:47). One can thus understand why the justice of God became the pivot-idea for the Prophet, the instrument of God's wrath.

> Material prosperity had led to an excessive valuation of wealth and power and to a belief that human planning could achieve almost anything. The great merchants were chiefly affected, but similar attitudes were found among those who were dependent on them or who tried to copy them. Against this the Qur'ān insisted on the omnipotence of God and his punishment of evildoers, including wealthy men who refuse to help the needy; this punishment might be either in this world, or in the life to come, or in both. [106]

In the South African context the exploitation of the weak by a few, elicits the wrath of Allāh (*ghadab*). From a Qur'ānic point of view it could also be said that capital has acquired an idolatrous nature. The resolution of divine anger and the prevention of Judgment Day, takes place via the amelioration of the conditions of the poor. It is striking that the visitation of divine justice on corrupt nations happen in history rather than at the End (*al-ākhira*). The demise of the apartheid-government can thus be read as a portent sign of Allāh's wrath or liberation; in the words of the Qur'ān: '*succow*'.

The vindication of God's honour also occupies a prominent place in the Hebrew Scriptures, although again (as in the case of Islam) there are different emphases in Judaism. What is offered here is that tradition

within this religion that takes the issue of divine wrath seriously. The Zealots' retributive acts were based on their understanding of the wholism of ancient Judaic ethics. In other words, their insurrection was not merely class or economic warfare, but simultaneously a holy war. In their eyes the occupation of Jerusalem and the land of God by heathen foreigners seemed blasphemous. The warring factions thus regarded imperial rule as a subversion of Jewish religion and chose to defend Jerusalem as God's dwelling place.

Kaufmann holds that in Judaism (*Yahaduth*) the relation of evil to divine righteousness is an ancient problem. The various psalms of vengeance (e.g. 44, 74, 79, 115) are indications that the enemies have desecrated Yahweh's name, so that the psalmist fears for God's honour. The pathos created is a crisis of faith due to the prosperity of the wicked.

> When harsh reality challenged the conventional view of divine justice, concern for the honor of God violently disturbed the devout. They could not break out in insults or surrender to despair; they could only complain and question and go on seeking an answer. At bottom, it is not so much the human side of undeserved suffering that agitates the Bible as the threat it poses to faith in God's justice. [107]

Neusner's exposition of Leviticus Rabbah shows that the ancient sages, completing their interpretation of this book around 400 C.E., pondered on the theodicy question. These rabbis believed that the prosperity of the wicked was temporary for they will ultimately be punished by God. Here, as in the Qur'ān, just punishment is not limited to the moral personal sphere, but overtakes nations too. In the ancient sages' view divine punishment means that "God hides his face."[108] According to Baeck it is the faithful who must "sanctify God" in situations where wickedness prevails (Ezek. 20:41; Lev. 22:32). Every ethical decision and deed for

the good avenges God's name which has been profaned by the evildoers. Thus in Rabbinic thought the concept of the *Kiddush ha-Shem* (the "sanctification of the Divine Name") has emerged. God's providence and justice is reflected in the ethical actions of the believers.[109] Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai puts it in the following way: "You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and I am God; when you are my witnesses, I am God, and when you are not my witnesses, I am not God."[110] To be contextual, it could be argued that in the South African context the major role played by Christianity in the colonial and neo-colonial oppression of the indigenous peoples, constitutes a desecration of Yahweh's holy name. Conversely, the struggle against this quasi-religious oppression constitutes a *Kiddush ha-Shem* with a view to unveil the hidden divine face.

In traditional African theology the theodicy question also features pertinently, as the image of God among the Khoi-Khoi clearly shows. Witbooi explains that the Khoi-Khoi personified evil in the conception of ||Gaunab (the Evil One). The latter, connected with the whirlwind, is the bearer of sickness and death. Tsui ||Goab (God the Creator and raingiver) engaged ||Gaunab in battle and defeated him. However, ||Gaunab, the source of sickness, drought and death, comes to life repeatedly so that the struggle continues. In the first and original battle with the Perpetrator of Evil, God was injured because the dying ||Gaunab wounded his knee. Since that time God became known as Tsui ||Goab (*tsu* or *tsui* means sore, wounded and *||goab* or *||khoab*, meaning knee).[111] The Khoi-Khoi thus believe in a suffering God amidst the human reality of the cycle of evil, sickness and death, rather than a triumphant Omnipotent. The final battle in which ||Gaunab would be totally destroyed, is yet to come. The confession that God actually

bears a scar, vindicates the Supreme Being who now suffers in human history, but will triumph over evil ultimately. From a Khoi-Khoi perspective God is present in the age-long history of black suffering - punctuated by the massacres of Sharpeville and Soweto, Boipatong and Bisho - as the Wounded One. In the prayer that was sung on the occasion of the rain ceremony, the paradox of faith in the power and wisdom of this vulnerable God, is visible:

> Thou, O Tsui ||Goab!
> Father of our fathers,
> Our Father!
> Let stream the thunder cloud
> Let our flocks live,
> Let us also live, please;
> I am so very weak
> from thirst,
> from hunger.
> Let me eat field fruits.
> Art thou not our Father
> Father of our fathers
> Thou Tsui ||Goab?
> That we may praise thee,
> That we may bless thee,
> Thou Father of our fathers,
> Thou, our Lord,
> Thou, Tsui ||Goab! [112]

From a Christian perspective the theological idea of avenging God's honour is not new. In 1098 Anselm completed his *Cur Deus Homo?* ("Why did God become Human?"), in which he wrestled with this question in dialogical form. For him the withholding of obedience dishonours God and is sinful. It is only when we have rendered to God obedience ("the entire will of a rational creature ought to be subjected to the will of God"), that our works would be pleasing. Anselm explains his reasoning by way of human analogy.

> When one wrongs any person's honour, it does not suffice to restore his honour, unless he gives back to the man (sic) whom he has dishonoured something which may be pleasing to him, according to the extent of the injury caused by his dishonour. [113]

Here the reverence of God by the sinner (surrendering the human will), is compared to a wrongdoer who surrenders (gives back) that which was taken from the wronged. For Anselm the vindication of God's name occurs on the personal plane, while Thomas Müntzer extends it to the social-political sphere.

The claim of black oppressed people that the vindication of God's honour has to do with the question of the divine presence or absence in a situation of suffering is, in terms of the above teaching from Judaism, remarkably Hebraic. Belief in the love and power of an omnipotent and merciful Supreme Being is put to the harshest test amidst the experience of poverty and oppression. Black people as crossbearers, Mofokeng contends, reflect on and identify with the suffering of the crucified Christ in the light of their own daily suffering. Jesus' cry of abandonment is an echo of black people's experience of Godforsakenness. "The cross is the concentration point or climax of the test of tenacity of God's love for suffering and perishing humankind."[114] In a later publication Mofokeng maintains that Christ is taking the wrath of God on himself. The great sacrifices and insurrection of the oppressed, in "daring to die for their life and that of their fellow men and women", is a witness of God's presence among those who suffer. The cross, an instrument of violence and vengeance however, was only temporary, for the resurrection of the crucified One vindicated the tenacity of God's love. Suffering black people, on the other hand, in establishing a dialectical movement of crossbearing and insurrection, undergo a long Good Friday. "To this entire movement, resurrection stands ahead of us as a coming and beckoning object of hope that encourages and empowers the crossbearers of our day."[115] In this construct then, comparable to

the Jewish notion of the sanctification of Yahweh's name, the liberative actions of black oppressed people vindicate the confession that God is indeed to be found on the side of the poor.

Concretely "the poor" in South Africa, whose experience of poverty as an historical, socio-political evil, has been outlined in Part One of this thesis. They are the hungry and the naked; the 'discarded ones' or 'surplus people' forcefully removed to uninhabitable Bantustans; the homeless and the unemployed; the marginalized squatters. In their songs of sorrow, anger and despair, the question whether there is Good News is a burning one, because the long Good Friday endures.

Asina mthuthulezi watsha ngumlilo.
Thumela uLulazaro anthi usothixo phina
Turu rurururu turu ruru turu

(We have no nanny (comforter),
Our nanny is burnt.
Send Lazarus and where is God?)

Ilizwe lethu, iSouth Africa,
Lisithembisa ngenkululeko.

Kuthiwa masiziphathe ngokwethu
Thina bantsundu.
Imithandazo yethu bantsundu
ngaba wankele na enkosini?

(Our country, South Africa,
Promises us freedom.
It is said we black people
should rule ourselves.
Are our prayers, we black people,
heard by God?) [116]

In South Africa, God's honour had been violated for centuries by this country's version of the Constantinian pattern. Historically the colonial, quasi-religious concept of Christian Western Civilization crystallized into *"geen gelykheid in Kerk en Staat"* (no equality in Church or State), with a "Christian" apartheid-state as its final accomplishment. This is why the Kairos-theologians find the linking of

God to the colonial history of dispossession, specifically in the preamble to the 1983 South African constitution, blasphemous. The God portrayed there is in fact the antichrist, the devil.

> In humble submission to the Almighty God, who controls the destinies of nations and the history of peoples who gathered our forebears together from many lands and gave them this their own ...; who has wondrously delivered them from dangers that beset them. [117]

In a special service held on 16 June 1985, people prayed for the downfall of the Nationalist government. Allan Boesak's sermon highlighted the fact that the theological justification of apartheid was even more scandalous than its actual brutality.

> But the name of Jesus can never be used to justify exploitation, it can never ever be used to justify the wanton killing of our people, it can never ever be used to justify oppression and suffering. It is a name of power, it is a name of liberation, it is a name of love, it is a name of compassion, it is a name of justice, it is a name of peace. Those who know the name of Jesus know peace; those who know the name of Jesus know justice, and they will stand up and fight. In this name we stand, in this name we pray for justice and for peace, in this name we pray for the crumbling of unjust structures. [118]

The sermon is grounded in Boesak's belief that Christian faith transcends all ideological and nationalistic ideals. The question is how the suffering of the poor and the honour of God can be vindicated? As suggested earlier, the issue of land is crucial to this process.

3. Corrective Justice

> *Non remittur peccatum nisi restituatur ablatum* (Without restitution, no remission).
> - Augustine of Hippo

The ethical maxim that corresponds in our situation to the quest for corrective justice, is *the repossession of land and the redistribution*

of wealth. The issue of land, as we have seen in Chapter One, is an ancient quarrel. It should also be borne in mind that the aboriginal Wars of Resistance were basically land-wars. Apart from the unhistorical myth that the land was "empty", it must be stated theologically that land is a gift from God to people. Our theology of land (developed in Chapter Two) illuminates the contextual tenet that Africa is a divine gift to Africans. From the perspective of black, dispossessed people, land and wealth are inextricably bound together.

We have already alluded to the hostility that the Prophet Muḥammad engendered from the great merchants of Mecca, the recipients of Allāh's wrath: "And those who hoard up gold and silver and opened it not in Allāh's way - announce to them a painful chastisement" (9:34b). It is therefore not surprising that within the process of the Islamization of Arabia, the rights of the poor were regarded as crucial. The objective of Islam was not only spiritual, but to wipe out poverty from the Moslem society. One of the Five Pillars of Faith, the *Zakāt* (poor-due), ensures the redistribution of wealth. Abdur Shād explains that the poor have been exempted from its payment, while it is incumbent upon the rich to share their wealth. "Islam, being pre-eminently a religion of service and humanity lays special stress upon performing charitable acts to minimize the sufferings of human beings when they succumb to death for want of food, drink, clothing and abode."[119] Shād further asserts that Islam, which breaks down the distinctions between rich and poor, cannot endorse capitalism as it sentences the destitute to "a miserable life."[120]

For the Zealots of the late Second Temple era, economic repression and

the extirpation from their land were not simply forms of enslavement, but the negation of clear biblical ideals (chapter 3). If we accept the premise that they were devoutly religious Jews, then their effort to redress the economic imbalance was in all probability based on the traditional sabbatical laws. Overburdened by progressive indebtedness, the peasants judged that the high priestly aristocracy shunned these humanitarian prescriptions. Maimonides' response to this situation is significant. He, for example, observed that the jubilees were not carried out at all during the period of the Second Temple.[121] To understand the significance of what he says, it is necessary to remind ourselves of the basis of Jewish teaching on the jubilee year.

The essential significance of the sabbatical year and the Jubilee in particular, is to ensure an equitable distribution of wealth. In the Deuteronomic law (Dt. 15:1-18) the remission (*shemittah*) occurs every seventh year, when all persons who have been enslaved for non-payment of a debt are set free. The Code of the Covenant (Ex. 21:2-6) makes provision for the setting free of Israelite slaves. According to Roland de Vaux the Jubilee (*yōbēl*) is an ancient institution and its prescriptions contained in Leviticus 25: Every fifty years fields and houses which had been alienated from their original owners, were returned. The theological ground for these measures was the liberatory acts of Yahweh in the people's history. "Israelites cannot be cast into perpetual slavery, for they are the servants of God, who brought them out of Egypt."[122] In brief, this teaching caused the peasants-turned-Zealots to interpret their desolation as a repressive situation that truncated the Torah's ideals of economic justice and social equality. Their seizure of the Temple, the replacement of the high priest, and the discriminate killing

of the city's treasurer and other prominent figures, were violent attempts to establish the *yōbēl* and redistribute the nation's capital.[123] It is not suggested here that the jubilee year itself be restored, but the ethos that inspired it be revitalized in our situation, namely, the prevention of economic imbalances and the restoration of the land to its rightful owners.

The restoration of the land to its rightful owners does not mean the expulsion or repatriation of white people. It is the denial that in a post-apartheid era white structures would retain their power to resist corrective justice in an arbitrary fashion. Setiloane argues that the colonists misused the ancient African tradition of sharing and kindness. Africa fell "prey to the wiles and greed of the European interloper coming in all guise - a wandering shipwrecked traveller, explorer, teacher, missionary, and all."[124] Nevertheless, exclusivity had never been a facet of African philosophy. Setiloane states that the resolution, "This land belongs to us" (*Lomhlaba ongowethu*), "...does not necessarily foreclose or shut out any other consideration borne out of the generosity of hearts begotten and nurtured in *Botho-Ubuntu-Ubuntungu-shi*."[125]

From a Black theological viewpoint the colonial encroachment on the land and the neo-colonial forced removals to Bantustans and group areas, are indicative of consummate greed (Mt. 6:24). A re-reading of the Naboth narrative by Samuel Abrahams in terms of South African history, confirms this. In his exegetical study on divine anger in the prophetic literature, the parable of Naboth's vineyard symbolizes a God-given land. Because of king Ahab's greed, Naboth was murdered and his confis-

cated vineyard became the property of the royal household (1 Kings 21:1-18).

> In this narrative Naboth represents the people who, because they are weak and vulnerable, fall prey to royal expansionism. Naboth further represents those people who, with the firm conviction that Yhwh sides with the poor and the weak, protest against abuse of power in all its forms ... And the vineyard? In this narrative it is no ordinary vineyard, but fulfills the role of a God-given land. [126]

In Abrahams' construct the murder of Naboth and the confiscation of his vineyard symbolize the African experience of conquest and the theft of their land. Black people's struggle for identity, dignity and survival therefore depends on their repossession of the land. For David Mosoma the indigenous claim to land theologically rests on the acknowledgement that the land inherited from the ancestors, is in the final analysis a gift from God. Naboth's refusal to sell his land, Mosoma argues, shows that he understood that as a heritage, his land was a divine gift that could not be sold. Genuine peace between black and white thus cannot be actualised without genuine land restitution.

> Theologically, land restitution is not a consequence of a political vote, but a consequence of God's liberational activity exhibited in the change of power equation between the oppressor and the oppressed, rich and poor. For this reason, any authentic political transformation should be predicated upon land repossession, as sine qua non for justice and peace. [127]

The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) correctly observed in New Delhi, August 1981, that in South Africa "the usurpation of the lands of the black peoples by the whites has placed them in a frightening state of dependency."[128] But not only did colonial imperialism cut blacks off from their means of livelihood, it also

expunged the authentic redistributive African values substituting them with antihuman concepts.[129] In African culture land is life, and political justice thus cannot be separated from economic justice. We therefore stress that economists should take heed of the egalitarian significance of the Jewish Jubilee, the Islamic *Zakāt*, and the African dialectic understanding of land and life. While redistribution of wealth undoubtedly is a very complex economic problem, the Church also cannot shirk her responsibility to demand its enactment. To be sure, it is not the task of the Church to prescribe a specific economic policy. But she must measure every economic system proposed in terms of the question whether the alienated children of God, whose wrathfulness had been generated by land-theft, will be vindicated. The question of land is indissolubly linked to the question of wealth. That is to say, the indigenous peoples' alienation from their land also meant loss in terms of capital. A necessary sequel to corrective justice is therefore compensatory justice.

4. Compensatory Justice

Di tloga ba apari di ya ba folleding (Pearls worn by princesses today may be worn by their maids in future).
- Ellen Kuzwayo on African sayings

The ethical maxim that corresponds to the quest for compensatory justice, is *reparation*. Malcolm X remained a firm proponent of compensatory justice, though the apocalyptic content of his thinking should not be underrated (compare the payment of *diyat* or 'blood-money' mentioned in Sūra 2:178-79). It is economic justice done to the deprived black community that would appease God's wrath on white America. Malcolm insisted that he did not beg the white community to finance the Nation of

Islam or (later) black businesses, but simply demanded what was due to them. His critique included white Christianity, a "slave religion", who supported and benefited from the enslavement of African-Americans.

> ... think how rich America had to become collecting the wages not of just a handful of people but of millions of black people working not for a year but for 310 years, without one day's pay. And it is your labor that made America rich, and it is the blood that you sacrificed on foreign battlefields that made America powerful ... No, we want our share of what we invested here. And if we get it then America has salvation, but if she doesn't pay off her debt God will collect and God won't take part payment. He will take the entire country ... and give it to whom he pleases. [130]

It has already been noted that the point of the *talion* principle is to enact legal or just retaliation (that is, monetary restitution except in the case of premeditated murder). Birnbaum points out that Judaism substituted the primitive family-feud or cycle of revenge with the payment of 'blood-money'. That an impartial court of law should determine fair compensation for the wronged, is grounded on the Torah's prohibition of hatred (Lev. 19:17-18). Referring also to the prescriptions of the Mishnah (Bava Kamma 8:1), Birnbaum concludes: "In Jewish jurisprudence, physical injuries which are not fatal are a match of monetary compensation for the injured party."[131]

Jesus' command of enemy love (Matthew 5) indeed poses a challenge to the wronged not to take the law into their own hands, but to forgive. Thus forgiveness replaces vindictiveness, not justice. A consistent narrative reading of the Scriptures makes this insight even more transparent. Reparation is spotlighted, for instance, in the Zaccheus narrative (Luke 19). If it is borne in mind how the Palestinian peasantry hated the Ro-

man double tax system (chapter 3), then the position of Zaccheus, a chief tax collector, becomes clear from the perspective of the poor. Besides the fact that he had accepted the responsibility to collect at the tolls, he contributed to the corruption by adding his own profits. His confrontation with the Galilean healer, a victim himself, led to a decision to compensate those whom he had robbed ("four times as much", v.8). Only then Jesus assured him: "Salvation has come to this house today!" (*sōteria tō oikō toūtō egéneto*). The kernel of the story is the willingness of the repentant sinner (*hamartōlos*) to pay back those who were exploited.

Yet, to make reparations is not punishment. The point of reparations, suggests Karen Lebacqz, "is not to punish the perpetrator of injustice as much as it is to restore the balance of power, repay the debt, and re-establish right relationship."[132] The historical complicity of white Christian churches in the systemic oppression of South African black people, requires their readiness to address the economic imbalances. In the light of the biblical perception that reparations are a reflection of *metanoia* become concrete, the white NGK, having confessed their part in the creation of apartheid, must pay their debt. The English-speaking churches cannot be exempted from this obligation either.

The idea of reparations, needing to be made to establish justice and peace in contemporary history, is not new at all. In 1969 in the United States of America the National Black Economic Development Conference presented their "Black Manifesto" to the Christian white churches and the Jewish Synagogues, demanding 500 million dollars. James Forman, former director for International Affairs of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), played a central role.[133] It would be

fair to state that the latter was profoundly influenced by the repeated calls for reparations by Malcolm X, who had close relations with the SNCC during his last years.

The aim of an ecumenical ethic of vengeance is to make theologically transparent those steps needed to be taken towards the establishment of national reconciliation. Genuine redemption from our societal ills cannot bypass the quests for retribution, the vindication of God's name, the repossession of the land, the redistribution of wealth, and reparation. Only via these painful but moral stadia, the wrath of God and the anger of God's children is resolved and *shalōm* within reach. Villa-Vicencio argues that in a time of political transition theology must contribute concretely to a programme of nation-building. The eschatological vision of God's coming reign has to be kept alive and allowed to break into the existing destructive realities. He further perceives a link between the liberation of oppressed and alienated South African people and the whole continent of Africa which experiences the dire consequences of apartheid. Such a theology should avoid two extremes, namely 1. the "absolutizing of relative political systems" and 2. theological indifference vis-à-vis all political choices. Because of this responsibility, the church must continue doing social analysis. "A nation-building theology has a special obligation to empower the nation to become involved in the ongoing quest for national liberation as well as political and economic independence."[134] It is significant that the development of a theology of reconstruction is intensifying in South Africa and the contributions to the debate by S. Duncan and J. Cochrane deserve mention. According to EATWOT's African co-ordinator, Prof. S. Maimela, the theme for this association for the next four years will be

"Theology and Reconstruction".[135] It is asserted here that the various facets of our ethic of vengeance mentioned thus far, are geared towards the actualization of one ultimate goal: redemptive justice.

5. Redemptive Justice

WaSambalia o Tembo waJani teso.
(When the elephants fight, it's the grass that suffers).
- Swahili proverb

The ethical maxim that corresponds to the quest for redemptive justice, is *renewal*. It is striking that in the Holy Qur'ān divine justice emerges as "the pivot-idea" (Rahbar) but, simultaneously, Allāh is frequently portrayed as the Beneficient (*al-Barr*, 52:28), The Forgiving (*al-Halīm*, 2:235), and The Merciful (*ar-Rahmān*, 55:1). One of the great achievements of Moḥammad was the unification of the Arabs, and it is clear that his consciousness of the grace of God played therein a major role. After his holy war against the Meccans (especially the victorious Battle of Badr in 624 should be noted), he seized Mecca in January 630 virtually in a bloodless manner. The Prophet concentrated on nation-building rather than destruction.[136] Although he did not shirk his responsibility to order execution in case of premeditated murder, his grace toward his former enemies means an extension of the divine grace to the human sphere. "Of a dozen or so persons specifically excluded from the general amnesty, several were pardoned. Muḥammad's treatment of the Meccans as a whole was so generous ..."[137]

The critical question may be posed whether Malcolm X, though correctly stressing the divine wrath and judgment, had an underdeveloped sense of Allāh's benevolence. Justice can only be redemptive if oppressed people

who seek it, simultaneously cultivate a consciousness of the mercy of God. Although a marginalised voice within Islam, the major contribution of Malcolm X was undoubtedly his analysis of "the depth of racism", which still lingers on in the North American social fabric.[138] While nonracialism remains the socio-political ideal, the existence of racism should not be mystified, but effectively dealt with. Wolterstorff's observation in this regard is valuable:

> What unites us as bearers of the image of God is more important that what divides as a members of nations. In their dispensing of justice, the states of the world must always make their ethnic diversity secondary to their essential human unity rather than the other way around. In the modern world this means that there can be no ethnic state, because such a state inevitably wreaks injustice. [139]

In close proximity of the understanding that God is "the Judging One and the Just One", Judaism believes that the renewal of the world is the responsibility of humanity as "the free moral deed."[140] According to rabbinic literature the righteous human act may even, in a sense, be decisive for God, for Jews refuse to believe that history is the consequence of Fate or an inevitable lot. Being the partners of God the creator, humans become creators and restorers of peace (*shalōm*, wholeness). The kingdom of God is therefore nothing else but "the ideal ethical reality" that is to be created by humanity.[141] Conversely, it means that people have the freedom to choose against God, thus deserving the divine wrath and judgment. But, while sin is a human creation, the people of God are called upon to "return" to God, to freedom and purity. Atonement (at-one-ment) does not rest on a mediator or redeemer, but a continuous movement by repentant sinners to begin anew again and again. This redemptive cycle, breaking through the cycle of revenge, is called *Teshuvah*. "Faith in God receives its full expression and therewith does

faith in man, which is ultimately faith in atonement - in the ethical redemption of ourselves, our fellow men, and all mankind (sic)."[142] Even if Christians' faith in a liberating mediator is crucial, the Judaic optimism in the ability of human beings to create a new interpersonal and socio-political equilibrium *coram Deo*, should be appreciated.

The losses that South African blacks have suffered at several levels have already been alluded to. In this paragraph attention is given to a particular legacy of the apartheid system that continues to retard the process of renewal, namely, human alienation. In the words of the Belhar Confession: "... the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity."[143] The theological-ethical question is how these negative forces can be combatted.

From a Christian point of view the renewal of a people of society hinges on the affirmation that God is at once the creator and the redeemer. This *sine qua non* was expressed by the ecumenical movement especially in the aftermath of World War II: "God has not abandoned this world."

> We have no right to set limits to what God may be pleased to do within this present age. Indeed, such hopeful and expectant action for the doing of God's will in the world, in the face of apparently overwhelming odds, is an essential part of our full witness to the present reign of God. All our action will be but humble, grateful and obedient acknowledgement that God had redeemed the world and that we are called to participate in His ministry of reconciliation. [144]

It is only after acknowledging God's redemptive work in the world, that the WCC's Evanston Assembly in 1954 spelled out the need for "a responsible society", because of "desperate human need".[145] Ever since its

official inception in 1948 the ecumenical movement has been concerned with justice that defends the freedom and dignity of human beings. Redemption, as Van der Bent makes clear, increasingly began to play an important role in the theological thinking on human rights. God has made the world and humankind to reflect her/his love and glory, and the "entire function of the church as a reconciling community is under challenge to be reviewed and renewed by the Christian commitment to human rights".[146] Another significant aspect had been the development of understanding spirituality anew. Slogans like 'spirituality for combat' and 'the liturgy after the liturgy' (from 1975 onwards) wrongly created the impression that churches should first start with worship and then become involved in socio-political renewal. However, as Joan Puls explains, the struggle against classism, racism and sexism should be a part of our spirituality and liturgy.

> Spirituality embraces one's ministry and service, one's relationships, one's personal and communal prayer life, one's approach to the political and social environment, in short, one's lifestyle ... Spirituality then is incarnational, daily integrated. To be authentic it must have dimensions of combat, of search and retreat, of renewal ... [147]

It is important, argues South African Jesuit priest, Xolile Keteyi, for African Christians to integrate their traditional spirituality with the Christian faith. In a creative and critical way the values of the forebears should be recaptured and joined with the demands of the Gospel. Keteyi chooses to call this process "self-possession". "We need to possess our African tradition and our African experience consciously and with pride. We need to possess our Christian faith as something that belongs to us and not as something foreign."[148] During June 1992

Christians from African and Asian countries embarked on a programme with a view to inspire *cosmic spirituality* in the world. By this they mean that not only the deterioration of the earth through pollution is taken seriously, but also destruction of human relationships. Cosmic spirituality, reaching back to its "roots in traditional religions and in the Bible", wants to rediscover the unified wholeness of life.

> We spoke about the oneness of all these problems and concerns and struggles because of the oneness of the cosmos. In cosmic spirituality the social justice activist, the feminist, the ecologist, and the religious searcher can find one another in Christ. Their concerns are not merely connected; they are, when properly understood, one and the same. [149]

Political rage as a phenomenon has manifested itself in both constructive and destructive ways. What then should be the task of Christianity vis-à-vis black bitterness and anger? First of all, churches' ownership of vast pieces of land that were alienated from the indigenous people during the colonial era, is problematic. They should combat this alienation not merely by confessions of guilt, but by participating in the process of restorative justice. Also, an all-encompassing spirituality will abolish the psychological barriers erected by apartheid theologians and ideologues, as well as the dichotomy between spiritual and political affairs. The alarming trend of right-wing violence means that especially the Afrikaner churches will have to take it upon their shoulders to allay the ill-founded fears of white people. Consider the placards primary school children carried on the October 1990 Kruger Day festivals in Vereeniging: "*Die eerste kaffer in ons skool skiet ek vrek*" (The first 'kaffir' in our school I will kill).[150] Consider a news item of 20 January 1991 that an eight-year old black girl was allegedly choked by AWB-members for making use of a desegregated swimming

pool in De Aar.[151]

In our endeavour to contribute to the transformation of South Africa, the Gospel's predilection for the poor must be taken seriously. The Theological Advisory Commission of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference describes the just person as the one who accepts her or his responsibility and takes the trouble to set matters right. The Commission acknowledges that it is action for justice that redeems people from "the burdens and afflictions of the past."[152] The conditions that *cause* the rage, must therefore be removed and redeemed. Ultimately it does not matter whether the State President is black or white, but whether aggressive steps will be taken to ameliorate the hardships of life. Mosala is therefore right to prioritize the protection of the weak in the current debate on reconciliation.

> Reconciliation must have something to do with the reversal of our alienation; and our alienation is not alienation from white people first and foremost; our alienation is from our land, our cattle, our labour ... Our reconciliation with white people will follow from our reconciliation with our fundamental means of livelihood. [153]

Destructive black rage may well become a perennial societal problem, for the marginalized will not accept political changes that do not mean an end to chronically low wages, bad housing, hunger and inferior education. Therefore, if there would be no thorough programme of economic justice, some would probably continue to address the ancient quarrels in the bloody and morally unacceptable form of wild justice. Recent reports on indiscriminate violence against white civilians allegedly by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) and the formation of an organisation calling itself Youth for the Revolution, confirm this observation.[154] The creative dialectic between the restoration of

justice and the power of enemy love reverberates in the hymns of Zephania Kameeta. His Psalm 68 denotes both hope and destruction, lifting the oppressed and despised people from the dust and bringing down the proud and mighty from their thrones:

> God, who lives in slums and locations,
> cares for orphans and protects widows.
> God will give those who live outside in
> the cold a home to live in,
> and will lead those who dwell in the hell
> of apartheid out into happy freedom.
>
> O God, lead our people across the
> desert of colonialism, oppression
> and racism.
> Shake the foundation of the evil regime -
> and destroy it. [155]

Summary Statement

1. The very first violent clashes between the Khoi-Khoi and the Dutch colonists in 1659 up to the Bambata rebellion in 1906, were waged by the South African indigenous peoples essentially to defend their land. The struggle then shifted to a nonviolent plane that reached its climaxes during the fifties and eighties. In the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre and the banning of the liberation organisations, armed struggles continued to centre around the repossession of the land. Theologically the history of dispossession necessitates an examination of divine providence and human land-ownership, especially in the light of Christianity's complicity in the subjugation of the aboriginal peoples. Within the history of resistance two strands related to human vengeance emerged, namely, the manifestation of political rage in constructive and destructive modes. African Nationalism and Black Consciousness, for example, are expressions of human anger endeavouring to channel the pent-up rage. A land ethic needs to assert the legitimacy of black peo-

ple's claim to the land and, simultaneously, the authentic African tradition of incorporatedness.

2. The apocalyptic notion of God's impending judgment frequently comes up in contexts of oppression and suffering. The Zealots' siege of Jerusalem was as much a social-economic effort to right historic wrongs, as an affirmation of their zeal for Yahweh's righteousness. In Luther's eyes Müntzer was a facilitator and prophet of chaos, undermining the divinely instituted social order. But actually the Alternative Protestant reformer adhered to a different theological-ethical view regarding the responsibility of Christians living under a tyrannical regime. Not only had the peasants the right to wrest the Sword from the German princes, but Müntzer was convinced that the Spirit had elected him to be God's destroyer of the ungodly. While Malcolm X got tired of waiting upon Allāh to vindicate the ghettoized, he never executed a holy riot against the "white devil-race". The apocalyptic content of his theology becomes transparent in his reinterpretation of disasters and calamities as portent signs of the wrath of God. White America is doomed if she refuses to repair the damages done through centuries of exploitative action. These three case studies provide a valuable insight into the ethical traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, with respect to the relation between divine anger and human vengeance.

3. The Palestinian people of the land during the late Second Temple era, understood the symbols in which Jesus' "good news" were clothed. Being a Jew himself, the main character of the Gospel

tradition did not dichotomize the spiritual and political spheres. This means that the arrival of God's reign contained immediate implications for the ruling class. At the same time the destitute must seek justice not via the morally unacceptable form of the blood-feud or revenge, but enemy-love. From a black Christological perspective the Jewishness of Jesus signifies his becoming black in a situation of racist exploitation. However, forgiveness as an ethical act is incumbent upon the wronged when the oppressors concretize their experience of *metanoia.* The apostle Paul's exhortations to the Roman Christians further make clear that civil authorities are God's agents of wrath (*ekdikoi*) to administer the divine vengeance in human history. Tyrants lose this divinely instituted position, and may be replaced by other nemeses. Because political rage is such a complex phenomenon, its resolvement can only be accomplished by an ecumenical and comprehensive ethic. Gleaming certain maxims from a variety of religious traditions, we conclude that the transformation of South African society depends on the vindication of God's holy name as well as the enactment of corrective, compensatory, punitive and redemptive justice.

4. The systematic fragmentation and polarization of South Africans in terms of race, gender, tribe and class, has led to hatred and fear. The endemic violence entrenched in our society seems senseless, but is in fact a consequence of centuries of colonial oppression, alienation and extended suffering. From a historical point of view, it is not surprising that a particular dimension of township unheavals is acts of vengeance by the dispossessed. These are not always forces of destruction. Understanding God's wrathful

children in our context requires the ability to see within their deeds of despair and hear within their cries of rage, the cry for justice. Many whites seem to expect from black people not to succumb to bitterness, anger or aggression, no matter how much they are exploited or traumatized. However, a kind of unnatural 'Christian' patience and reasonableness vis-à-vis this history of misery, is not Christian at all, but a distorted ethos of submissiveness forced upon oppressed people. In order to hope for a renewed and transformed society, it is imperative for the victims to shun vindictiveness and a desire to take revenge upon their oppressors. It is equally imperative for a democratic, post-apartheid government to espouse justice and uphold courageously an ethic of vengeance, knowing that ultimately their judgment falls under the judgment of the eternal God. If these redemptive measures are ignored, all of us in this beautiful land will be consumed by the rage of people too long oppressed.

INTRODUCTION

1. K. Koyama, *Waterbuffalo Theology*, 96. See also his *Mount Fuji and Mount Sinai*, Part I.
2. G. Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 13.
3. K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/I, 478-82.
4. K. Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 43.
5. K. Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 43.
6. K. Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 48.
7. S. Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Dread*, 99-104. Italics added.
8. S. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling and the Sickness unto Death*, 171.
9. F. Dillistone in A. Richardson and J. Bowden (ed), *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology*, 53.
10. J. Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads*, 200-01.
11. T. Mofokeng, *The Crucified Among the Crossbearers*, 39. Also 24-29, 38-44.
12. ICT, *The Road to Damascus*, 9.
13. J. Míguez-Bonino, *Toward a Christian Political Ethics*, 97.
14. A. Nolan, *God in South Africa*, 105. Italics added.
15. M. Gwala, "The Big Jig", in T. Couzens and E. Patel (ed), *The Return of the Amasi Bird*, 349.
16. R. Bainton, *War and Peace*, 63.
17. A. Boesak, *Farewell to Innocence*, 11.
18. B. Bozzoli and P. Delius in J. Brown et al. (ed), *Radical Historical Review*, 13-45.
19. C. Villa-Vicencio, *Civil Disobedience and Beyond*, 4.
20. S. Marks in *J African Hist* XIII/I, 1972, 55-80.
21. E. Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays*, 345-46.
22. M. Mathabane, *Kaffir Boy*, 309.
23. By kind permission of Xolani Maxwell Rani and Elize Roberts.
24. "Seven Steps of Stone", from the musical *District Six*, Banjo Records, 1986. By kind permission of David Kramer and Taliep Petersen. See also B. Nasson in P. Bonner et al. (ed), *Holding Their Ground*, 285-309.
25. E. Smelik, *Wraak, Vergelding en Vergeving*, 7-9.
26. E. Smelik, *Vergelden en Vergeven*, 106.
27. E. Smelik, *Wraak, Vergelding en Vergeving*, 12.
28. A. Campbell, in *Mod Ch*, 25/3, 1983, 4-5.
29. L. Morris in *Expos T* 63, Feb. 1952, 144.
30. W. Grier and P. Cobbs, *Black Rage*, 207-08.
31. W. Grier and P. Cobbs, *Black Rage*, 208-10.

CHAPTER ONE

1. J. Cochrane, *Servants of Power*, 24.
2. Phrase coined by Cosmas Desmond when he investigated the forceful relocation of blacks during the late sixties. See *The Discarded People*.
3. J. Cochrane, *Servants of Power*, 32.
4. R. Elphick and V. Malherbe in R. Elphick and H. Giliomee (ed), *The Shaping of South African Society*, 4-7. The authors point out that the term 'Khoisan' is a compound word devised by scholars and derived from names for the two groups into which Khoisan are conventionally divided: The Khoi-Khoi - meaning 'men of men' or genuine people - (the derogatory terms 'Hottentots' and 'Bushmen' had been coined by the early Dutch settlers) who kept cattle and sheep, and the San hunter-gatherers, who did not. The Khoisan were distinctly related to the inhabitants of most of sub-equatorial Africa but over time their physical appearance had deviated markedly from that of most Africans. The two groups are hard to distinguish and the relationships between them complex. Thus, by the seventeenth century, the term 'San' came to denote not a seperate racial group, but rather a completely different lifestyle to that of stockkeeping. For H. Bredekamp the amalgam 'Khoisan' indicates an actual process of intermingling, intermarriage, acculturation and even assimilation which occured over centuries. This crucially implies a common

Southern African derivation. In T. Cameron and S. Spies *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 28-30. T. Davenport mentions that linguistically the culture of the Khoi-Khoi and the San were interlocked, whilst at the cultural level, they shared a substantially common religious tradition. *South Africa*, 3-6.

5. S. Marks, *J African Hist*, XIII/I, 55.
6. S. Newton-King in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 106.
7. Jan van Riebeeck, the commander of the first European settlement at the Cape, who referred to the Khoi-Khoi as 'dull, stupid, lazy, stinking', illustrates the superficiality of these stereotypes which undoubtedly still operate within the framework of rationalization. See e.g. I.D. Mc Crone, *Race Attitudes in South Africa: Historical, Experimental and Psychological Studies*, 10-13; 47-49; 122.
8. H. Bredekamp, "From Fragile Independence to Permanent Subservience" (1488-1713), in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 102.
9. S. Debroey, *Zuid-Afrika*, 5.
10. S. Marks in *J African Hist*, XIII/I, 60-61.
11. H. Bredekamp, "The Origin of the Southern African Khoisan Communities", in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 30.
12. S. Debroey, *Zuid-Afrika*, 7.
13. S. Marks in *J African Hist*, XIII/I, 62-63.
14. H. Bredekamp, "From Fragile Independence to Permanent Subservience" (1488-1713), in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 103.
15. S. Debroey conveys van Riebeeck's twisted argumentation: He could try to wipe out the Khoisan, but their military strength remained obscure and their numerical supriority posed a dangerous risk factor. Also, he feared revenge. He reckoned that he could not eliminate all the aborigenes, because "dat soude niet goet wesen, alsoo ons die schelmen dan overal de wegen te onveyligh houden souden, soo voor de vissers, timmerluyden in't bos als andersints, welcke niet eens altijt ende overal waegenomen worden, ons tot revengie te overvallen en de masacreeren.", *Zuid-Afrika*, 23-24.
16. T. Maggs, in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 43.
17. P. Maylam, *A History of the African People of South Africa*, 17.
18. J. Peires, in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 49.
19. J. Peires, in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 47.
20. G. Setiloane, *The Image of God among the Sotho-Tswana*, 123. A. Smith had contributed an article on the trade of Delagoa Bay as a factor in Nguni politics. By the early years of the 18th century, the Portuguese and English had been superseded by the Dutch who, lured by its possibilities as both a trading site and a base from which to reach the interior, occupied this Southern African harbour from 1721 to 1730. During the period 1750-1830 the trade (mainly ivory but also gold and copper) were made available to European traders in exchange for cloth, brass, beads and arms. Beyond question most of the ivory exported during this period extensive commerce was derived from Natal. Logically the northern Nguni chiefdoms were also experiencing a period of internal growth and consolidation. Smith then suggests that these were wars (initiated by Dingiswayo, Chief of the Mthethwa) fought over matters of trade and the control of the export to Delagoa Bay, and therefore a tool for the consolidation and strengthening of the Zulu state. In L. Thompson (ed), *African Societies in Southern Africa*, 171-89. It is in this sense that "Mnguni" (H. Jaffe) regards Tshaka as a unifier, not a destroyer of tribes. *Three Hundred Years*, 90.
21. G. Setiloane, *The Image of God among the Sotho-Tswana*, 124.
22. G. Setiloane in *J B Th SA* 5/2, Nov 1991, 32.
23. J. Armstrong and N. Worden in R. Elphick and H. Giliomee (ed), *The Shaping of South African Society*, 110.
24. S. Marks in *J African Hist* XIII/I, 62-64.
25. S. Debroey, *Zuid-Afrika*, 28.
26. J. Armstrong and N. Worden in R. Elphick and H. Giliomee (ed), *The Shaping of South African Society*, 148.
27. R. Ross, *Cape of Torments*, 96-116.
28. Institute of Race Relations, *De Wereld in Zwart-Wit*, 37.
29. Institute of Race Relations, *De Wereld in Zwart-Wit*, 38-40.
30. C. West, *Prophesy Deliverance!*, 47-48.
31. J. Witvliet, *The Way of the Black Messiah*, 112-13.
32. J. Witvliet, *A Place in the Sun*, 49.
33. S. Marks in *J African Hist* XIII/I, 62-64.
34. R. Elphick and V. Malherbe in R. Elphick and H. Giliomee (ed), *The Shaping of South African Society*, 21.

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35. S. Newton-King in T. Cameron and S. Spies (ed), *An Illustrated History of South Africa*, 107.
36. S. Marks in *J African Hist* XIII/I, 75.
37. V. Malherbe in S. Newton-King and V. Malherbe, *The Khoikhoi Rebellion in the Eastern Cape (1799-1803)*, 97-98.
38. P. Maylam, *A History of the African People of South Africa*, 70.
39. F. van Jaarsveld, *The Awakening of Afrikaner Nationalism*, 19.
40. "Mnguni" (H. Jaffe), *Three Hundred Years*, 81.
41. V. Malherbe, *What They Said*, 38.
42. P. Maylam, *A History of the African People of South Africa*, 73.
43. O. Ransford, *The Great Trek*, 115.
44. J. Clegg in P. Bonner (ed), *Working Papers in Southern African Studies*, Vol. II, 191-94.
45. "Mnguni" (H. Jaffe), *Three Hundred Years*, 96.
46. V. Malherbe's compilation contains Sarel Cilliers' version of the Danskraal Oath, in *What They Said*, 63-64. O. Ransford gives the version of J.G. Bantjes and it is interesting to notice that some Englishmen in the commando joined in making the vow, while five Boers abstained for fear of God's vengeance on their descendents if in years to come they broke the promise. *The Great Trek*, 150.
47. O. Ransford, *The Great Trek*, 155.
48. M. Benson, *South Africa - The Struggle for a Birthright*, 16.
49. M. Hope and J. Young, *The South African Churches in a Revolutionary Situation*, 12-13.
50. N. Majeke, *The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest*, 5-7.
51. N. Majeke, *The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest*, 1.
52. J. Adonis, *Die Afgebreekte Skeidsmuur Weer Opgebou*, 36.
53. M. Hope and J. Young, *The South African Churches in a Revolutionary Situation*, 23.
54. G. Cuthbertson in C. Villa-Vicencio (ed), *Theology and Violence*, 16.
55. J. Cochrane, *Servants of Power*, 32.
56. J. Cochrane, *Servants of Power*, 34-35.
57. C. Villa-Vicencio, *Trapped in Apartheid*, 54.
58. D. Tutu in A. Boesak (ed), *Om Het Zwart te Zeggen*, 113-21.
59. J. De Gruchy mentions the schism which occurred within the Anglican community in the mid-nineteenth century, and which led to the formation of two separate autonomous churches. One of the issues in the dispute between Bishops Gray and Colenso, was that the latter had been "convinced that the way forward was not to reject African religious traditions and customs out of hand, as other missionaries tended to do, but to leaven African culture and its culture and its social system with the gospel. What was required was the transformation of African society, not the detribalization of individuals by turning them into black Europeans". *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, 17-18.
60. G. Setiloane, *The Image of God among the Sotho-Tswana*, 85.
61. I. Mosala in I. Mosala and B. Thlagale, *The Unquestionable Right to be Free*, 98.
62. J. Ngubane in I. Mosala and B. Thlagale, *The Unquestionable Right to be Free*, 76-79.
63. ICT, *African Independent Churches: Speaking for ourselves*, 16-21; K. Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, ch. 5.
64. J. Adonis, *Die Afgebreekte Skeidsmuur Weer Opgebou*, 224. It should be kept in mind that Van Riebeeck's responsibility included the expansion of the Reformed Christian tradition. It is remarkable how the commander saw God's hand in certain happenings. When many in the garrison fell sick, he complained in his Resolution of June 1656 that some were leading such a godless life, 'that God poured out his wrath upon us'. S. Debroey, *Zuid-Afrika*, 16-17.
65. J. Templin, *Ideology on a Frontier*, 80.
66. C. Loff in J. De Gruchy and C. Villa-Vicencio (ed), *Apartheid is a Heresy*, 17-20.
67. C. Loff in J. De Gruchy and C. Villa-Vicencio (ed), *Apartheid is a Heresy*, 22. David Bosch, referring to the resolution of 1857 as a "shift", "pivotal" and "the turning of the tide", differs fundamentally from Loff by ascribing it to a weak ecclesiology, rather that racial prejudice. In the light of the historically crucial role of the government, preventing the DRC what it wanted to be, Loff's argument that there had been no shift at all, is the more logical one. D. Bosch in J. De Gruchy and C. Villa-Vicencio (ed), *Apartheid is a Heresy*, 30-35.
68. J. De Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, 3.
69. J. Templin, *Ideology on a Frontier*, 9.
70. L. Ntoane, *A Cry for Life*, 52.
71. C. Villa-Vicencio, *The Theology of Apartheid*, 8.

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72. J. de Gruchy in J Rel Ethics 14/1, Spring 1986, 27-43
73. M. Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing*, 37.
74. A. Dube in T. Couzens and E. Patel (ed), *The Return of the Amasi Bird*, 41.

CHAPTER TWO

1. H. Polak, H. Brailsford and F. Pethick-Lawrence, *Mahatma Gandhi*, 6-18.
2. M. Juergensmeyer, *Fighting with Gandhi*, 136. L. Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, 67.
3. M. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, 141.
4. M. Swan, *Gandhi*, 48-49.
5. C. Andrews, *Mahatma Gandhi*, 163. B. Pachai, *The South African Indian Question*, 21. M. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, 214.
6. L. Fischer (ed), *The Essential Gandhi*, 56.
7. M. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, 386.
8. M. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, 146-52.
9. Nair (Pyarelal), *Towards New Horizons*, 81.
10. B. Pachai, *The South African Indian Question*, 32-33, 56.
11. B. Kumarappa in M. Gandhi, *Non-Violent Resistance*, iii.
12. R. Iyer, *The Moral and Philosophical Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, I, 2.
13. M. Swan, *Gandhi*, 256.
14. L. Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, 67.
15. T. Merton (ed), *Gandhi and Non-Violence*, 14.
16. T. Merton (ed), *Gandhi and Non-Violence*, 56.
17. A. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!*, 1-3.
18. F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, 2.
19. C. Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, 96.
20. Some chiefs awarded their wealthier subjects (usually Christians) large tracts of land for individual tenure, while the majority of their (poorer) subjects were expected to hold land on a communal basis. This uneven spread of peasant practices generated social antagonisms as the high incidence of attacks during 1880-81 by rebels upon mission peasants (Kholwa) shows. C. Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, 98-99.
21. P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism*, 6.
22. As early as 1866 Mfengu chiefs applied unsuccessfully to have 600 of their followers registered, and by the 1870s Africans showed an increased interest in gaining the vote. A. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!*, 5.
23. P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism*, 3-6.
24. A. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!*, 7.
25. S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa*, 56.
26. F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, 10-13.
27. T. Karis and G. Carter, *From Protest to Challenge*, I, 8.
28. F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, 1.
29. A. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!*, 34-37.
30. A. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!*, 69. In South African history it is a classic example of many instances of disproportionate *kragdadigheid* (state violence). According to Frantz Fanon this frequently happens in colonial situations: "The settler-native relationship is a mass relationship. The settler pits brute force against the weight of numbers. He is an exhibitionist. His preoccupation with security makes him remind the native out loud that there he alone is master". *The Wretched of the Earth*, 42.
31. For an interpretation of South African protest songs within the framework of the theodicy-question (including Bokwe's "Plea for Africa"), see W. Boesak, *God, Onderdrukking en Protes*, hfs. 1.
32. The ICU did not start African Trade unionism. Its antecedent, the IWA, formed in 1917, did not last long, however, and later joined the ICU *en bloc*. F. Meli, *South Africa Belongs to Us*, 63-65.
33. Wellington Buthelezi captured the imagination of thousands of Transkeians when he predicted airborne liberation by black Americans. E. Webster (ed), *Southern African Labour History*, 114. "The Israelites" gathered around their religious leaders on the commonage at Ntabelenga, near Queenstown. Returning solely to the Old Testament, they

became "fanatically indifferent to the threat of modern weapons in the belief that Jehovah (sic) was about to liberate his chosen people from the foreign yoke". The Bondelzwarts, a Khoi-Khoi tribe of Namibia, refused co-operation with the Smuts government, which moved in with aircraft and machine-guns. P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism*, 73. Cf. T. Davenport's comment that these were "tragic examples of group resentment among landless blacks". *South Africa*, 279.

34. Published as an open letter in *The New Leader*, 30 september 1927.
35. P. Bonner in E. Webster (ed), *Southern African Labour History*, 115.
36. T. Karis and G. Carter, *From Protest to Challenge*, I, 145-54, 158-346.
37. S. Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid*, 14-23, 131-35, 163-67.
38. F. Meli, *South Africa belongs to Us*, 108-16.
39. M. Benson, South Africa - *The Struggle for a Birthright*, 149.
40. T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 80-84.
41. C. Saunders, *Historical Dictionary of South Africa*, 132.
42. M. Benson, South Africa - *The Struggle for a Birthright*, 236-37.
43. H. Kenney, *Architect of Apartheid*, 225.
44. M. Motlhabi, *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, 105.
45. T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 243.
46. M. Motlhabi, *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, 105.
47. N. Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, 125-61.
48. M. Sobukwe, *Speeches from 1949-1959*, 37.
49. T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 83. According to Fatima Meer Mandela hardly believed that PAC members suffered from real racism: "Deep down the desire for African exclusivism was fuelled by the horrendous inferiorization of the Africans in the country, and not racism, that one could not throw the sentiments of an Africanist into the same basket as those of an Afrikaner nationalist." *Higher than Hope*, 121.
50. T. Thoalane (ed), *Black Renaissance*, 7.
51. B. Khoapa (ed), *Black Review: 1972*, 40-42.
52. An examination of the speeches of early BC spokespersons shows the unmistakable influence of Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Pan-Africanists like Kwame Nkrumah and the writings of American black power ideologues. The unique South African dynamics nevertheless made BC "an indigenous phenomenon". J. Kane-Berman, *Soweto*, 103. Cf. D. Woods, *Biko*, 36-39; *S. Biko, I Write What I Like*, 73-79; K. Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 9-42; S. Carmichael and C. Hamilton, *Black Power*, chapters I-III.
53. D. Woods, *Biko*, 38.
54. M. Motlhabi, *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, 118-19.
55. By 1965, the South African Congress of Trade Unions had collapsed inside South Africa. Most of the key organisers had been imprisoned, while others had gone into exile. The 1973 strike wave, which involved an estimated 150 factories in Natal, marked the beginning of a new era in South African labour history. New Nation, *New History I*, 89-90.
56. B. Khoapa (ed), *Black Review: 1972*, 55.
57. M. Motlhabi, *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, 111.
58. T. Thoalane (ed), *Black Renaissance*, 7. Motlhabi says that perhaps the first direct attack made by the government on BC, was the outlaving of Rev. Ntwasa, former director of UCM's Black Theology Project, in 1973. *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, 147. Basil Moore's compilation of essays: *Black Theology, The South African Voice*, was also banned upon its appearance in 1973.
59. W. Boesak, in *Dunamis*, 4/87; also J. Kane-Berman, *Soweto*, 48.
60. J. Kane-Berman, *Soweto*, 48-67.
61. A. Brooks and J. Brickhill, *Whirlwind Before the Storm*, 169.
62. M. Motlhabi, *Black Resistance to Apartheid*, 149; D. Woods, *Biko*, 223.
63. S. Biko, *I Write What I Like*, 76.
64. S. Biko, *I Write What I Like*, 98.
65. S. Biko, *I Write What I Like*, 150.
66. SACC, *Emergency Convocation of Churches in South Africa*, 65-72.
67. M. Murray, *South Africa*, 206-07.
68. During the 80s a cycle of violence emerged with Umkhonto's attacks and government retaliation in the form of assassination, arrests, torture and executions. People like Petrus Nyaose, his wife Jabu Nzima, Neil Aggett,

Tshihiwa Muofhe, Solomon Mahlangu, Simon Mogoerane, Harry Mosololi, Thabo Motaung, Ruth First and Andries Raditsela should be mentioned here. M. Murray, *South Africa*, 208-14.

69. WCC, *South Africa in Crisis*, (PCR Information 1983/17), 27-29; R. Kerson in D. Mermelstein (ed), *The Anti-Apartheid Reader*, 276-82; M. Murray, *South Africa*, 129-94. The ideological differences between the ANC and PAC, especially concerning nonracialism, were finally mirrored in the policies of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU, with the National Union of Mineworkers, NUM, as the strongest affiliate), and the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (AZACTU).
70. C. Mayson, *A Certain Sound*, 66; WCC, *Southern Africa*, PCR Information 1985/20, 42-46; O. Williams, *The Apartheid Crisis*, 54-55. P.W. Botha resuscitated the tri-cameral constitutional proposals of his predecessor, B.J. Vorster, in which socalled Coloureds and Indians would have representation in Parliament, with the exclusion of Africans. The UDF was formed to fight this new racial Constitution, but also the Koornhof Bills. The latter sought to tighten the control of the lives of urban Africans.
71. NF defines the apartheid-problem as 'racial capitalism' i.e. a system whereby the white state maintains economic hegemony by means of racial oppression. See L. Louw and F. Kendall, *SA: The Solution*, 81-83. Anti-racism, rather that nonracialism, is proposed as the political antidote. See N. Alexander, *Sow the Wind*, especially 41-56.
72. *Business Day*, 13 June 1986; M. Murray, *South Africa*, 294.
73. F. Chikane, *The Church's Prophetic Witness*, 26.
74. ICT, *The Kairos Document*, 13-15.
75. B. Goba in *J Th So Africa* No 31, Jun 1980, 26.
76. B. Goba in *J Th So Africa* No 41, Dec 1982, 54.
77. S. Maimela in *J Th So Africa* No 41, Dec 1982, 59.
78. D. Tutu in *Africa Report*, Jul - Aug 1983, 6.
79. S. Dwane in *J Th So Africa* No 35, Jun 1981, 31-32; M. Buthelezi in J. Parratt (ed), *A Reader in African Christian Theology*, 95-101.
80. L. Sebidi in B. Tlhagale and I. Mosala (ed), *Hammering Swords into Ploughshares*, 253.
81. S. Maimela, *Proclaim Freedom to my People*, 54.
82. W. Boesak in A. Musschenga en W. Haan (red), *Moet de Kerk zich met Politiek Bemoeien?* For documentation on state violence during the 80s see e.g. CIIR, *South Africa in the 1980s: State of Emergency*, London, 1980; UDF et al., *Repression in a Time of 'Reform'*, Johannesburg, 1984; Grahamstown Committee of Democrats, *An Eyewitness Report*, 1987; H. Cook, *The War Against Children: South Africa's Youngest Victims*, New York, 1986; J. van Eck, *Eye-Witness to "Unrest"*, Pretoria, 1989; Institute of Race Relations, *Policing Against the Black People*, London, 1987.
83. M. Murray, *South Africa*, 299, 315-36.
84. South Africa had one of the highest execution rates in the world. In 1987 164 people were hanged - the highest since 1910. Amnesty International's newsletter, FOCUS (Oct 1987), reported that from 1978 the upward trend in the annual number of hangings has been almost unbroken. See *Monitor*, Jul 1989, 40-48.
85. D. Chidester, *Shots in the Streets*, 41.
86. H. Mashabela, *A People on the Boil*, 113.
87. A. Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu!*, 173.
88. Cognizance is taken of Claus Westermann's argument that there is no mention of a belief in the creator in the Old Testament. The concept of creation faith, he says, presumes the possibility of an alternative, namely of non-belief, while the whole of the ancient world, including Israel, simply took it for granted that the world and humanity had been created. The decisive difference between Israel and her neighbours is that the latter also spoke of the creation of the gods, whereas for Israel God is outside creation. In his *Genesis 1-11*, 25-26; 42-43. We retain the theological concept of 'creation faith' as this survey does not exclude the New Testament perspective or its recognition by the early Church. Secondly, the intention here is to concentrate on those aspects which will contribute to the development of a theology of the land that relates to the issue of vengeance, and not to get bogged down by the various interpretations of the creation narratives. (E.g. the literal version - see N. Ridderbos, *Beschouwingen over Genesis I*; the evolutionary model in P. Teilhard de Chardin's *The Future of Man*; the Christocentric interpretation of Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* III/1 and III/3).
89. G. Buttrick et al. (ed), *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. I, 365.
90. P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, 264.
91. J. Durand, *Skepping, Mens, Voorsienigheid*, 213.
92. H. Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 465.
93. C. Wright, *An Eye for an Eye*, 67-68.

94. C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 159.
95. L. Gilkey, *Reaping the Whirlwind*, 257.
96. G. Lilburne, *A Sense of Place*, 102. Cf. the standpoint of Thomas Torrance that the purpose of the incarnation was God's redemptive renewal of the contingent order. It is the penetration into the finite, fragile and disrupted condition of our existence, in order to deliver it from the evil to which it had become subjected, healing and re-ordering it from its ontological roots and entirely renewing its relation to the Creator. *Divine and Contingent Order*, 134-41.
97. C. Wright, *An Eye for an Eye*, 68-69.
98. M. Paget-Wilkes, *Poverty, Revolution and the Church*, 83-85.
99. C. Avila, *Ownership*, 144-50.
100. J. Hart, *The Spirit of the Earth*, 151.
101. J. Hart, *The Spirit of the Earth*, 154.
102. W. Brueggemann, *The Land*, 47.
103. W. Brueggemann, *The Land*, 78. Cf. also 59-65.
104. J. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 27. See also pp. 39-47; 210-25.
105. T. Witvliet, *A Place in the Sun*, 84.
106. ICT, *The Kairos Document*, 7. According to Saul Trinidad the "Spanish Christ", during the *conquista*, had been an image to legitimate the exploitative domination. In J. Miguez-Bonino (ed), *Faces of Jesus*, 49-65.
107. J. Koole, *De Tien Geboden*, 127.
108. F. von Meyenfeldt, *Tien tegen Een*, deel 4, 63-69.
109. J. Heyns, *Die Nuwe Mens Onderweg*, 207-26.
110. J. Heyns in D. Clarke (ed), *The Southern African Policy Forum*, 17-20.
111. J. Lochman, *Signposts to Freedom*, 125-28.
112. G. Thomas, "Uprooted", in *Umgqala*, 4/March 1987, 10.
113. T. Mofokeng, *The Crucified Among the Crossbearers*, 14; J. Kunnie in I. Mosala and B. Tlhagale (ed), *The Unquestionable Right to be Free*, 160.
114. T. Mofokeng, *The Crucified Among the Crossbearers*, 23.
115. M. Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing*, 93-96. With regard to the relation between colonialism and ecological disruption (the case of the Australian Aboriginals), see G. Lilburne, *A Sense of Place*, chps. 2 and 5.
116. Z. Matthews, *Freedom for My People*, 112.

CHAPTER THREE

1. M. Borg, in *J Th St*, 22/1971, 508. M. Grant holds that it does not seem likely that Simon had been a Jewish political extremist even in his earlier life. *Jesus*, 132.
2. A. Richardson, *The Political Christ*, 43. Cf. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 41-43; 198-200; 280-82; 324-26.
3. M. Borg, in *J Th St*, 22/1971, 508.
4. A. Richardson, *The Political Christ*, 43. Cf. J. Dunn, in J. Neusner et al. (ed.), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 270-72.
5. Cf. *Ant.* 18:6, 20, 160, 165, 167-68; *War* 2:264-65.
6. *Ant.* 17:342-55; *Ant* 18:1-2; *War* 2:111-17. Cf. E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 150-54.
7. *Ant.* 18:23.
8. M. Hengel, *Die Zeloten*, 102-03.
9. M. Hengel, *Victory over Violence*, 56.
10. M. Hengel, *Victory over Violence*, 27-28. One of the most basic religious views of Judas and Saddok was that God owned the land and had given it to the Israelites for their use as God's people. Paying tribute to Rome represented a usurping of God's right and amounted to slavery. *Ant.* 18:3-4.
11. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 26.
12. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 47-50.
13. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 347.
14. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 355.
15. See S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, for his exegetical understanding of the saying on crossbearing (57 and 344); on the tribute question (345-49); on the 'cleansing of the temple' (331-34).

16. P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, 194. Cf. R. Eisler, *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist*, chapters 16 and 17; also his *Die Messianische Unabhangigkeitsbewegung*, II, S.8.
17. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 146-206.
18. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 205-20.
19. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 221-321.
20. O. Cullmann, *Jesus and the Revolutionaries*, 29. See also 3-5, 16-24.
21. Cf. M. Hengel's view that the Zealots shared with Jesus 1. The proclamation of the imminence of God's sovereignty; 2. A readiness to renounce personal property and accept martyrdom. But Jesus radically differed in other aspects from the Zealots. It is not the revolutionary transformation of certain political and economic structures that would form the groundwork for God's imminent sovereignty, but only the "transformed heart" of the individual. The coming of God's sovereignty cannot be enforced by revolutionary actions. *Victory over Violence*, 73-76.
22. O. Cullmann, *Der Staat Im Neuen Testament*, 31. Cf. his *Jesus and the Revolutionaries*, 34-37.
23. *War* 4:161-62. Marcus Borg correctly locates the use of the term within the war narrative, but mistakenly adduces *War* 2:444 to identify the followers of Menahem (who were Sicarii), as Zealots. In *J Th St*, 22/1971, 505.
24. F. Bruce admits that the Zealots are not mentioned by Josephus by name before the war, but that admission does not hinder him stating that they emerged as a distinct party in 6 C.E. They were self-sacrificingly devoted to the ideal of the coming of God's kingdom. Their strategy though, to establish it violently, could not be endorsed by Christ "... who taught his followers to take contrary line to the Zealots, not to resist violence or retaliate against it, but to turn the other cheek ..." *New Testament History*, 97; 179-81. John Yoder, likewise, posits that while Jesus rejected the Zealot option, he upheld the social-political relevance of nonviolent resistance. *The Politics of Jesus*, 47-50; 90-93.
25. F. Jackson and K. Lake, *The Beginning of Christianity*, 421-25.
26. R. Price, in *Drew G*, 51/1, Fall 1981, 34.
27. M. Borg, in *J Th St*, 22/1971, 504.
28. S. Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, 173.
29. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 66.
30. *Ant.* 18:59-59.
31. *Ant.* 18:60-62. Cf. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 76.
32. A. Trocmé, *Jesus and the Nonviolent Revolution*,103. R. Horsley stresses that the violent repression by Rome of subjugated peoples was massive. It is no wonder that from 4 B.C.E. to 66 C.E. various forms of Jewish protest were nonviolent. The Sicarii's "terrorist" tactics were an exception during the late 50s and 60s. *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 28-50.
33. S. Dickey, *The Constructive Revolution of Jesus*, 31.
34. *War* 7:262-70.
35. M. Townsend, in *Expos T*, 87/Apr 1976, 212.
36. C. Roth, in *J Sem St*, 4/Oct 1959, 332-55. In his *The Dead Sea Scrolls* he infers that "the group at Qumran were ... Zealots." Especially 44, 63-69.
37. G. Baumbach, in *Ev Th*, 45, März-Apr 1985, 107. Josephus should be partly blamed for the confusion, as he himself sometimes calls all revolutionaries "brigands" (*lēstai*). This led to the assumption that all brigands then must have been revolutionists and therefore Zealots and therefore Sicarii. E. Schurer also seems to lump all the different groups together in making John of Gischala "the head of the fanatical nationalists or Zealots." *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus*, 484. Cf. Morton Smith's contra-argument in *Harv Th R*, 64/1, Jan 1971, 1-19.
38. A. Schalit, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 7, 44-48. Cf. *Ant.* 14:127-216, 330-491.
39. M. Stern, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 7, 89-90.
40. R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 31. Herod's magnanimous building projects included royal palaces, the great towers in the north-west corner of Jerusalem; the restoration of an ancient fortress, theatres, amphitheatres, and hippodromes; the expansion of Masada; the construction of cities: Caesarea, Maritima, Sebaste. These were all signposts of Hellenism. Even the coins minted by Herod reflect the Hellenistic character of his kingdom. See *Ant.* 15:285 ff., 366 ff.; *War* 1:570-73.
41. M. Stern, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 7, 111.
42. *Ant.* 17:149-63.

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43. S. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. 1, 262.
44. J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 125.
45. R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 56. Further reading on the Roman control during the period 6-66 C.E.: D. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution*, 47-93; A. Richardson, *The Political Christ*, 1-6; R. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 9-15, 49-58; M. Stern, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 7, 124-78.
46. J. Klausner, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 7, 205.
47. S. Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels*, 145. See *Life* 58.
48. In terms of the ritual expression of their beliefs the Temple was the focal point for all Jews in the pre-70 period. Yahweh-worshippers were emotionally involved with this centre. S. Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels*, 155. Also 150-52, 178-80.
49. *Ant.* 20:251
50. J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 158-59. Herod murdered the Hasmonean, Aristobulus III, and there were "no further candidates from that dynasty." For many years during his reign his father-in-law, Simeon Son of Boethus of Alexandria, then served as high priest. M. Stern, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 7, 90-91.
51. *Ant.* 20:181, 213.
52. R. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 29-30.
53. R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 55-56.
54. R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 61.
55. S. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 273.
56. J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 198. Cf. 96-99.
57. *Ant.* 20:206-07
58. *War* 2:254-56
59. E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 256-84.
60. *Ant.* 20:256; *War* 2:279.
61. *Ant.* 20:257. Cf. E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 283.
62. *War* 2:408, 433.
63. *Ant.* 20:186-87.
64. R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 206.
65. *War* 2:254-56.
66. R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 205.
67. *War* 2:444-48.
68. *War* 7:320-401, 409-19.
69. *War* 2:445; War 7:253-55.
70. R. Seltzer, *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, 223.
71. *War* 7:254-59.
72. *Ant.* 20:5, 160-61.
73. *Ant.* 20:105-72.
74. R. Horsley, in *J Rel*, 59/4, Oct. 1979, 435-58; R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 48-87.
75. *War* 4:135-61.
76. D. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution*, 97-99. See *War* 2:325-31.
77. Although D. Rhoads and R. Horsley essentially agree 1. that there were different anti-Roman groups; 2. that the Zealots proper had only been formed during the revolt of 66-73 C.E.; 3. that eventually the people who committed suicide on Masada in 73, were the Sicarii, they hold different views regarding certain historical details namely 1. the origin of the Zealots and 2. on leadership. Rhoads states that the lower priests provided the main leadership "although the democratic tendencies of the Zealots would imply that the leadership was shared", that is, priests and brigand commanders; *Israel in Revolution*, 110. In Horsley's view the bandit leaders formed the core of the Zealots; in *Nov Test*, 28/2, Apr. 1986, 166-71.
78. *War* 4:134-38.
79. *War* 4:197-208.
80. *War* 4:138-42.
81. M. Smith, in *Harv Th R*, 64/1, Jan. 1971, 19. The Zealot party drew its members largely from the village population of Judea rather than Galilee. S. Freyne's analysis of ancient Jewish social banditry serves as a corrective of the

idea that the phenomenon was widely spread in Galilee. He portrays a variegated picture of the social- economic situation in first-century Galilee. Although poverty among peasants (numerically the dominant class) was a pervasive reality, many owned small holdings and lived their lives along traditional lines. There were those, of course, at "both ends of the land-owning spectrum", but, generally speaking, the social conditions were less pressing than in Judea. Therefore, at the start of the revolt in 66 C.E. Galilee was not "seething with disaffection" or in a state of revolutionary turmoil. This reading contradicts Geza Vermes' assertion that "in the first-century ... Galilee was a hotbed of nationalist ferment." Freyne adds that social banditry, as defined by Horsley (i.e. as a religiously motivated struggle of violent proportions in order to right their wrongs), could well have been a dominant feature of Judean life, but not in Galilee. Instead, he only finds evidence of "scattered incidents of social banditry." In J. Neusner et al. (ed), *The Social World for Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 55-65; and *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels*, 159-67. Cf. G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 4-12.

82. *War* 4:151-57.

83. *War* 4:241-42, 155. R. Horsley and J. Hanson's explanation regarding the election of the country priest, Phanni son of Samuel, to the high priestly office, sheds some light on the occurrence. One should recognize that the ruling priestly aristocracy were the ones who were illegitimate. The Zealots, on the other hand, respected the sacred traditions and knew that the high priest's office was by ancient tradition a legitimate Zadokite. As there were still some true Zadokite families residing in the villages, they elected one of the "high priestly clans", named Eniachim/Jachim. The Zealots were thus restoring the traditional principle of hereditary succession. *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 230-33.

84. *War* 4:565-78.

85. R. Horsley, in *Nov Test*, 28/2, Apr. 1986, 191.

86. R. Musaph-Andriesse, *From Torah to Kabbalah*, 50-51.

87. *War* 4:385-88.

88 G. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, Vol II, 5.

89. J. Klausner, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 8, 258-60.

90. *Ant.* 18:3-9, 23-25.

91. *Ant.* 18:17.

92. M. Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 386-90.

93. M. Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, 403-04.

94. *Ant.* 18:18-19. Two other writers of the first century C.E. discuss the Essenes: the Alexandrian Philo in his treatise *Every Good Man is Free* and in *Apology for the Jews*. The other source is the Roman elder, Pliny, who includes them in the fifth book of his *Natural History*. Josephus however, is the only historian who claims that he had experimented with the Essene way of life when he was sixteen years of age (see *Life* 10-11).

95. *War* 2:138-43.

96. F. Bruce, *Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 130.

97. *War* 2:567; 3:11, 19.

98. *War* 2:134. F. Bruce and G. Vermes positively identify an Essene group with the Qumran community that composed the sectarian Dead Sea Scrolls. If their conclusion is upheld, the consequence is that these scrolls are then taken as the primary source for knowledge about the Essenes. In the War Scroll a strong vindictive element in the description of the holy war between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness, is undeniable. F. Bruce, *Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 123-35; G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 116-30. For a text on "The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness" see M. Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 390-99. Phillip Callaway asserts that the similarities between the Essenes and the Qumran sect do not outweigh the fundamental differences which argue against positive identification. *The History of the Qumran Community*, 86.

99. M. Perlman, *The Zealots of Masada*, 26-37; See *War* 5:402, 459.

100. D. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution*, 168-71. See *War* 6:98.

101. E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 154-55.

102. E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 293.

103. *War* 5:415.

104. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 63-64.

105. *War* 5:400-07.

106. M. Hengel, *Victory over Violence*, 36-37; 57-58.

107. P. Winter, *The Trial of Jesus*, 180.

108. E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 293.
109. *War* 6:312-13.
110. R. Beckwith, in *R Qumran*, 10, 1979/81, 531-32.
111. S. Benko, in *Th Z*, 25 Jg., 1969, 414. There are books from the Second Temple period that refer to eschatological salvation, such as the Book of Tobit, and the Wisdom of Ben Sira. In the Assumption of Moses the eschatological figure is the angel of God, but a human agent of the salvation is not mentioned. In this time there was a great variety of messianic figures. The Old Testament book of Zechariah already mentions two messianic figures, i.e. the eschatological high priest and the messianic Davidic king. The rebels probably harboured messianic pretentions. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 11, 1407-13.
112. *War* 4:139-41, 327, 335, 364-65.
113. R. Horsley and J. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 42, 224-25.
114. R. Horsley, in *Nov Test*, 28/2, Apr. 1986, 180. With respect to the Zealots' claim that Phanni was of Zadokite descent, see also J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 155, 192-93.
115. M. Stern, in M. Avi-Yonah (ed), *The World History of the Jewish People*, Vol. 8, 295.
116. *War* 7:268-69.
117. H. Danby (transl.), *The Mishnah*, Sanhedrin 9.6, 396.
118. S. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots*, 44-45. The argument may also be implicit in D. Rhoads' general remark that human motivation is never simple, and it is presumable that "the economic rewards of robbery and the psychological satisfaction of violence were of no less importance to ancient than they are to modern revolutionaries." He further identifies the use of daggers by the Sicarii as "a method of revenge." *Israel in Revolution*, 79, 165-66.
119. R. Horsley, in *Nov Test*, 28/2, Apr. 1986, 171-75. Cf. *War* 4:146.
120. *War* 4:364-65.
121. *Ant.* 20:214.
122. R. Horsley, in *Nov Test*, 28/2, Apr. 1986, 176.
123. Some scholars allude to popular justice enacted by gangs (*tsotsis*). Generally speaking, though, the relation between crime and gangsterism is such a serious social problem, that their actions cannot be romanticised. W. Schärf delineates the causes of gangsterism (especially in the townships during the late eighties): poverty, unemployment, the erosion of traditional forms of social control such as parents, teachers and community leaders; the turmoil created by states of emergency; the education crisis; the politicization of sport, and the marginalization of township youths. For the latter "... urban street gangs became the most important social support network. On the whole the township communities in which such gangs resided and operated perceived them to be negative in effect" (emphasis added). On rare occasions, Schärf shows, gangsters would co-operate with community organisations to encounter structural imbalances, but they would also assist the police (who lack legitimacy in the townships). More seriously, they "... also robbed and raped members of their own communities and indulged in gang fights over territory, markets and women." In D. Hansson and D. Van Zyl Smit (ed), *Towards Justice?*, 232-63. Thus, gangsterism could rarely be perceived as an effort to right social wrongs, but to interpret it as a form of Zealotism, would be to force the analogy. See also B. McKendrick and W. Hoffmann (ed), *People and Violence in South Africa*, ch 4; A. Brooks and J. Brickhill, *Whirlwind Before the Storm*, 286-92.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. D. Forte, *Luther, Müntzer and the Bookkeepers*, 163-65. Cf. H-J. Goertz' critique of the play in *Menn Q R*, 50/2, Apr. 1976, 83-84.
2. R. Thiemann, in *Luth Q* 27/4, Nov. 1974, 348.
3. G. Wendelborn, in *Con Via* 18, 1975, 57-58.
4. G. Wendelborn, in *Con Via* 18, 1975, 57.
5. G. Forell, in *Dialog* 2, Wint. 1963, 19. R. Kolb cautions that it is historically unsound to speak of "the Lutherans" being against the Peasants' Revolt. Christoph Schappeler, pastor in Memmingen, and Jakob Strauss were among some Evangelical Lutheran clergy whose reaction to the war was different from Luther's. Schappeler even assisted in the composition of demands in his area. In *Archiv Ref*, 69, 1978, 103-04.
6. H. Mackensen, in *Concor Th M*, 35, Apr. 1964, 198.
7. H. Mackensen, in *Concor Th M*, 35, Apr. 1964, 198.

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8. G. Forell, in *Dialog*, 2, Wint. 1963, 21.
9. G. Wirth, in *Con Via*, 19, 1976, 121-27. M. Smirin's *The People's Reformation of Thomas Müntzer and the Great Peasant War* of 1947 became the standard, authoritative Communist work on the subject. Besides emphasizing the existing portrayal of Müntzer as the true hero of the people, it charged that Luther had been the "spokesman of the bourgeousie."
10. H-J. Goertz, in *Menn Q R*, 50/2, Apr. 1976, 84. An interesting compilation of different but modern views on Müntzer is *The Anabaptists and Thomas Müntzer*, edited by J. Stayer and W. Packull.
11. G. Strauss, *Manifestations of Discontent in Germany*, 97.
12. J. Lortz, *The Reformation in Germany*, Vol. 1, 13.
13. The Anabaptists of Munster got rid of "all opposing elements" in the city. Consequently a violent clash ensued between the followers of Jan Matthys (who specially came over from Haarlem, Holland) and the authorities. It further incensed Luther to lump all Anabaptists together as having violent inclination. M. Brecht, in *Menn Q R*, 59/4, Oct. 1985, 363.
14. H. Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany*, viii, 40-41.
15. F. Hertz, *The Development of the German Public Mind*, 237-38.
16. Blood-revenge occurred frequently. In 1471 e.g. six cobbler apprentices of Leibzig sent a declaration of feud to the local university. They claimed that they had been insulted by students and had not received justice. Henceforth they would take revenge in every way on all students of the Leibzig University. Blood-revenge also remained legitimate in Switzerland until the seventeenth century. F. Hertz, *The Development of the German Public Mind*, 238-42.
17. J. Lortz, *The Reformation in Germany*, Vol. 1, 272; A. Dickens, *Reformation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, 30; F. Hertz, *The Development of the German Public Mind*, 294. Despite the lack of a political programme, contemporaries of Erasmus held that he had "laid the egg that Luther subsequently hatched." H. Hillerbrand, *Men and Ideas in the Sixteenth Century*, 12.
18. R. Pascal, *The Social Basis of the German Reformation*, 5-7.
19. S. Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, 35. Theologically the indulgence was meant as remission of punishment that was still due for a sin after the guilt itself had been forgiven. Politically however, it became a method of recruiting for the papal crusades throughout the late Middle Ages. Cf. John Donelly's remark that religious zeal, albeit misdirected, was the chief motive of the early crusaders. *Reform and Renewal*, 15-18.
20. S. Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, 24-26.
21. J. Donelly, *Reform and Renewal*, 39-62.
22. G. Heering traces the origin of the church-state synthesis to the fourth century when the emperor Constantine the Great (ruler 306-337) began to favour Christianity following three centuries of persecution. The early Christians, opposing the practice of war and the emperor worship that went with it, admonished those who volunteered for military service to choose between "the camp of light and the camp of darkness." The lines were redrawn when Constantine was converted to Christianity in 312, who started to envision a new bond between Church and State. As the imperial persecution of Christianity was halted, the symptoms of official heathendom were gradually abolished. The process culminated in the official proclamation by emperor Theodosius of Christianity as the State religion in 380. The State and Church, social, cultural and religious life thus formed a unity of thought, an organization regarded as Christian, a single body, a *corpus christianum*. That signalled, in Heering's view, the "fall of Christianity." *The Fall of Christianity*, 23-35. Cf. P. Johnson, *A History of Christianity*, 104-05; H. Berkhof and O. de Jongh, *Geschiedenis der Kerk*, 56.
23. F. Engels, in K. Sessions (ed), *Reformation and Authority*, 61. The incessant internal wars and feuds further depressed the state of the rural population.
24. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 124-25.
25. F. Engels, in K. Sessions (ed), *Reformation and Authority*, 62-63.
26. N. Birnbaum, *Social Structure and the German Reformation*, 275.
27. N. Birnbaum, *Social Structure and the German Reformation*, 210-16.
28. F. Engels, in K. Sessions (ed), *Reformation and Authority*, 63.
29. In the 1360s e.g. five fishermen were arrested for poaching upon the fishery of Abbot Mangold of Reichenau, who sentenced them to blinding. He later became bishop of the town. F. Hertz, *The Development of the German Public Mind*, I, 48.
30. Against this background the charity of religious orders such as the Brethren of the Common Life and the Modern Devotion movement, should be measured. J. Donelly recognizes in Thomas à Kempis' *Imitatio Christi* a strong, personal ethical thrust, but it lacks a social dimension. *Reform and Renewal*, 61-62.

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31. A. Dickens, *Reformation and Society*, 60-81.
32. J. Porter (ed), *Luther*, 72.
33. J. Clayton, *Luther and his Work*, 120.
34. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 126.
35. M. Hannemann, *The Diffusion of the Reformation*, 41-45.
36. Cf. Taira Kuratsuka's diagram of the reformers' attitudes and political positions. Cited by J. Stayer in *Menn Q R*, 51/3, Jul. 1977, 203.
37. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 6-7.
38. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 13.
39. H-J. Goertz (ed), *Profiles of Radical Reformers*, 32.
40. R. van Dülmen, *Reformation als Revolution*, 84.
41. G. Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation*, 160.
42. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 25. For background material on the militant Taborites, see his pp. 204-18.
43. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 27.
44. According to R. van Dülmen the Church in Zwickau began to lean towards a peculiar split: a church of the rich and a church of the poor ("Einer Kirche der Reichen stand eine der Armen gegenüber"). *Reformation als Revolution*, 82-86.
45. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 22-26.
46. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 43. Cf. G. Forell, in *Dialog*, 2, Wint. 1963, 14.
47. G. Williams, *The Radical Reformers*, 48-49; Already at the start of the fifteenth century the revolutionary Hussites had waged in Prague a struggle against ecclesiastical abuses. Despite the execution of their leader John Huss (in 1415) and continuous internal tensions, the followers rioted at length and finally waged a full-fledged war against emperor Sigismund until 1436. In the second half of the fifteenth century certain factions formed the "Unitas Fratum Bohemorum." Because of their own anti-clerical history, they felt attracted to Luther and by 1519 they hailed him as the "John Huss of Saxony." T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 28-30; E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 45-53.
48. G. Forell, in *Dialog*, 2, Wint. 1963, 14.
49. H. Hillerbrand, *A Fellowship of Discontent*, 8; T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 43.
50. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 73.
51. R. van Dülmen, *Reformation als Revolution*, 97. Cf. G. Rupp's comment: "We may stress the originality of his handiwork." *Patterns of Reformation*, 188.
52. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 75.
53. J. Irwin, in *Concor Th M*, XLIII/1, Jan. 1972, 21-28.
54. P. Smith and C. Jacobs (ed), *Luther's Correspondence*, II, 193.
55. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 220.
56. G. Forell, in *Dialog*, 2, Wint. 1963, 15. Also G. Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation*, 189.
57. H. Hillerbrand, *A Fellowship of Discontent*, 11.
58. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 220.
59. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 85-91.
60. G. Forell, in *Dialog*, 2, Wint. 1963, 15; G. Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation*, 196-97; E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 91-94.
61. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 69.
62. G. Forell, in *Dialog*, 2, Wint. 1963, 16.
63. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 108-10.
64. H. Hillerbrand, in *Menn Q R*, 38/1, Jan. 1964, 24-36.
65. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 190-91.
66. G. Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation*, 204.
67. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 128-29.
68. H. Hillerbrand, *A Fellowship of Discontent*, 17-18.
69. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 131.
70. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 109-25.
71. H-J. Goertz, *Profiles of Radical Reformers*, 40.
72. G. Rupp, *Patterns of Reformation*, 239.
73. K. Sessions (ed), *Reformation and Authority*, 38-39.
74. H. Hillerbrand, *A Fellowship of Discontent*, 24.

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75. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 164.
76. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 148; T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 166.
77. J. Atkinson, *Martin Luther and the Birth of Protestantism*, 243.
78. See the debates in H-J. Goertz, *Profiles of Radical Reformers*, 12-15, 40-43; J. Stayer, in *Menn Q R*, 51/3, Jul. 1977, 196-212; G. Williams, in *Union S Q R*, 39, 1984, 1-23.
79. J. Stayer and W. Packull (ed), *The Anabaptists and Thomas Müntzer*, 142.
80. G. Gotting, *Prophet einer Neuen Welt*, 84.
81. T. Mofokeng, *The Crucified Among the Crossbearers*, 16-44.
82. F. Engels, in K. Sessions (ed), *Reformation and Authority*, 64.
83. E. Gritsch, *Reformer Without a Church*, 123.
84. E. Gritsch, *The Authority of the "Inner Word"*, 19-21.
85. E. Gritsch, *The Authority of the "Inner Word"*, 35-37.
86. A. Drummond, in *Sixteenth Cent J*, X/2, 1979, 63-71.
87. T. Scott, *Thomas Müntzer*, 61-62.
88. J. Oyer, *Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists*, 18.
89. N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, 250.
90. N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, 254.
91. N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, 271.
92. N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, 262.
93. J. Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 74.
94. Cf. Luther's exposition of Rom. 3:22. According to him the apostle Paul is "describing what or of what nature the righteousness of God is ... it is that which can be possessed in no other way than through faith. Lest the proud again presume that this righteousness is given to them apart from Christ, and on the basis of their own merits, as if Christ were not necessary for it." In H. Oswald (ed), *Luther's Works*, Vol. 25, 31.
95. W. von Loewenich, *Martin Luther*, 122-26. Also J. Bakker, *Coram Deo*, 118-48.
96. L. Zuck, *Anabaptist Revolution through the Covenant in Sixteenth Century Continental Protestantism*, 7-9, 22-28, 268-69.
97. H. Hillerbrand, *A Fellowship of Discontent*, 23, 28-30; R. van Dülmen, *Reformation als Revolution*, 65-81.
98. J. Oyer, *Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists*, 20.
99. H-J. Goertz, in *Menn Q R*, 50/2, Apr. 1976, 83-113.
100. H-J. Goertz (ed), *Profiles of Radical Reformers*, 43.
101. P. Saith and C. Jacobs (ed), *Luther's Correspondence*, II, 217-18.
102. L. Volkmar, *Luther's Response to Violence*, 134-35.
103. L. Volkmar, *Luther's Response to Violence*, 159.
104. R. Crossley, *Luther and the Peasants' War*, 54-55.
105. W. Lazareth, in *Dialog*, I, Aug. 1962, 30. Lazareth disagrees with K. Barth, putting forward his own "bi-focal outlook."
106. C. Lindberg, in *Encount*, 37, Aut. 1976, 370-71.
107. C. Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar*, 42. Also U. Duchrow, *Zwei Reiche und Regimente*, 9-26; 273-304.
108. C. Bauman, in *Menn Q R*, 38/1, Jan. 1964, 44.
109. G. Forell, in *Dialog*, 2, Wint. 1963, 23.
110. G. Williams and A. Mergal (ed), *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, 69.
111. G. Williams and A. Mergal (ed), *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, 47-70.
112. E. Gritsch, *The Authority of the "Inner Word"*, 40. The authorities retaliated against the Anabaptists in Munster and executed most of the leaders. Of the original ministers in the upheaval, Bernhard Rothmann alone survived. In 1534 he expressed in his *Restitutions* the opinion that the "children of Jacob" should help God in punishing the "children of Esau." By the end of the same year he appealed in his *Van der Wrake* to "all true Israelites and covenanters of Christ" to take up arms in revenge and in defence of the theocracy. G. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 362-81; J. Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 227-52.
113. R. Thiemann, in *Luth Q*, 27/4, Nov. 1975, 359.

CHAPTER FIVE Notes pp. 160-71

1. Phrase coined by Ossie Davis who delivered the eulogy at Malcolm's funeral, Feb. 27, 1965. P. Foner (ed), *The Voice of Black America*, 1010-12; Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 457-60; also C. Ellis, *Beyond Liberation*, ch. 8.
2. Rap is part of America's black popular culture. Made up of anti-establishment rhymes delivered with a driving beat, it is criticized by some for its incendiary messages, and praised by others for its preaching against drugs, gang warfare, and other societal ills. See D. Toop, *The Rap Attack*, Boston, 1984; J. Adler, "The Rap Attack", and D. Gates, "Decoding Rap Music", both in *Newsweek*, Mrch 19, 1990, 56-63; C. Whitaker, "The Rap Revolution", in *Ebony*, Jun. 1990, 34-38.
3. J. Mecklin, *The Ku Klux Klan*, 95-122.
4. R. Brown, *Strain of Violence*, 21-28, 205-18. The ritual of lynching itself became a mass spectacle with thousands of whites partaking as spectators. Cf. E. Ayers' depiction of the "Southerness" that bred a violent culture of honour and sexual fear. *Vengeance and Justice*, chs. 7 and 8.
5. L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 12.
6. R. Burkett, *Black Redemption*, 19-21.
7. E. Cronon, *Black Moses*, 170-71.
8. M. Boulware, *The Oratory of Negro Leaders*, 58.
9. M. Boulware, *The Oratory of Negro Leaders*, 59. R. Burkett comments on Garvey's spectacular parades in the streets of Harlem, *Black Redemption*, 22. Cf. the biographical works of Garvey's widow, Amy Jacques Garvey: *Garvey and Garveyism*, Kingston, 1963; and *Black Power in America*, Kingston, 1968.
10. R. Burkett, *Black Redemption*, 27. Garvey even managed to establish a shipline to realize his dream of repatriating blacks to Africa and providing universal business for black people in the U.S. However, financial incompetence plagued the shipline and the endeavour failed. Also, the federal government and colonial powers became concerned about the implications of Garveyism, and after a two-year imprisonment, he was deported to his native Jamaica. E. Cronon, *Black Moses*, chs. 4 and 7.
11. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 1-10; also L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 12-21.
12. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 9-10. In Jan. 1973 Malcolm reported that his father's death was accidental. James Cone comments on this contradiction: "Whether the cause of the death was murder or a mishap, Malcolm's father's absence had a profound effect upon the economic and emotional well-being of the Little family." *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 43.
13. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 11-22.
14. L. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*, 433-40.
15. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 23-26.
16. L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 22-27.
17. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 32-37.
18. R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 108.
19. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 39-150; R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 109.
20. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 32.
21. H. Young, *Major Black Religious Leaders Since 1940*, 75; P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 32-33; Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 151-55.
22. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 155-59.
23. After the death of Elijah Muhammad in 1975, two Black Muslim factions emerged: Wallace D, a son of Muhammad, broke away to form the more open World Community of Islam in the West, while the "purists" remained in the NOI under the leadership of Louis Farrakhan.
24. C. Lincoln, *The Black Experience in Religion*, 246; J. Tinney, in *Chr T*, 17/22, Aug. 1973, 44-45.
25. E. Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism*, 4; C. Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America*, 10-15.
26. E. Calverley, in *Muslim M*, 55/4, Oct. 1965, 340; P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 39.
27. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 40.
28. P. Foner (ed), *The Voice of Black America*, 969-71.
29. E. Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism*, 54.
30. W. Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism*, 6.
31. G. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, 184.
32. W. Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism*, 6.
33. J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 154.

34. E. Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism*, 83-84, 256-64.
35. E. Calverley, in *Muslim M*, 55/4, Oct. 1965, 345; H. Young, *Major Black Religious Leaders Since 1940*, 77.
36. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 201.
37. R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 110.
38. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 202.
39. E. Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism*, 33.
40. B. Karim (ed), *The End of White World Supremacy*, 1-7; P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 59.
41. R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 110-11.
42. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 237-38.
43. L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 65-76.
44. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 238.
45. C. Ellis, *Beyond Liberation*, 97.
46. J. Whitehurst, in *Chr Cent*, 97, Feb. 27, 1980, 226.
47. L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 91-102.
48. R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 113; L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 79.
49. Cf. R. Williams, in *J Rel Thot*, 30/2, Fall 1973, 34-38.
50. L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 96; P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 96.
51 R. Kahn, in *J Rel Thot*, 38/2, Fall-Wint. 1981-82, 24.
52. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 204.
53. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 366.
54. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 98.
55. R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 114; L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 97.
56. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 98-99.
57. G. Breitman (ed), *Malcolm X Speaks*, 18.
58. B. Perry (ed), *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, 64-74.
59. G. Breitman (ed), *Malcolm X Speaks*, 4-5.
60. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 294-99.
61. R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 115.
62. B. Karim (ed), *The End of White World Supremacy*, 121-48.
63. H. Young, *Major Black Religious Leaders Since 1940*, 77-78; P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 118-19.
64. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 305.
65. G. Breitman, *The Last Year of Malcolm X*, 22-39.
66. G. Breitman (ed), *By Any Means Necessary*, 5.
67. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 134.
68. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 408-23.
69. J. Whitehurst, in *Chr Cent*, 97, Feb. 27, 1980, 226; Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 340.
70. J. Groppe, in *Sound*, 66, 1983, 447.
71. Cited in *Chr Cris*, 25/4, Mrch. 1965, 46.
72. H. Young, *Major Black Religious Leaders Since 1940*, 80.
73. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 180.
74. G. Breitman, *The Last Year of Malcolm X*, 68-69. Cf. G. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, 250-61.
75. "Statement of Basic Aims" (issued Jun. 1964) and "Basic Unity Program" (issued Feb. 1965) as appendices in G. Breitman, *The Last Year of Malcolm X*, 105-24.
76. G. Breitman (ed), *Malcolm X Speaks*, 33-34.
77. G. Breitman (ed), *Malcolm X Speaks*, 57.
78. B. Perry (ed), *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, 68.
79. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 204-06.
80. Cf. speech at OAAU founding rally in G. Breitman (ed), *By Any Means Necessary*, 33-67.
81. L. Lomax, *To Kill a Black Man*, 136-39; P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 227.
82. R. Brisbane, *Black Activism*, 123.
83. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 381.
84. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 428.
85. J. Whitehurst, in *Chr Cent*, 97, Feb. 27, 1980, 227.
86. J. Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*, 526.

87. W. Becker, in *Chr Cent*, 102, May 29, 1985, 559.
88. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 285, 368.
89. J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 269. See also C. Lincoln, in *Union S Q R*, 23/3, Spring 1968, 219-33; G. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, ch. 7; J. Cone, in *Th Today*, 43/1, Apr. 1986, 6-21; Cf. R. Clayton, in *Luth Q*, 20/2, May 1968, 123; F. Wentzel, *Epistle to White Christians*, 50-56.
90. A. Cleage, *Black Christian Nationalism*, xxxiii.
91. R. Liston, *Slavery in America*, 8.
92. J. Grant (ed), *Black Protest*, 7.
93. J. Grant (ed), *Black Protest*, 38-42; H. Aptheker (ed), *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, 74-75; R. Brown, *Strain of Violence*, 198-98.
94. G. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, 51; P. Foner (ed), *The Voice of Black America*, 66-72; V. Harding, *There is a River*, 134.
95. E. Ofari, *"Let Your Motto Be Resistance!"*, 144-53.
96. M. Griffiths, *Autobiography*, 26.
97. L. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*, 32-40.
98. J. Cone, in *Th Today*, 43/1, Apr. 1986, 9; Cf. Cooper-Lewster and Mitchell, *Soul Theology*, 29-42.
99. G. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism*, 100-01, 250-61.
100. E. Genovese, in R. Haynes (ed), *Blacks in White America*, 215.
101. Cf. C. Lincoln, in *Union S Q R*, 23/3, Spring 1968, 224.
102. R. Williams, in *J Rel Thot*, 30/2, 27-50. Joanne Grant concedes that the philosophy of the abolitionist movement was pacifism, but points out the certain leaders, including Henry Thoreau and Frederick Douglass, supported the use of arms by slaves: "Let every man work for the abolition of slavery in his own way. I would help all, and hinder none." Cited in J. Grant, *Black Protest*, 45-53, 64-65.
103. J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 245.
104. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 377, 399-401.
105. J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 159. See also 164-65.
106. J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 238.
107. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 381.
108. Quoted in J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 102.
109. J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 103-04, 305-06. Cf. G. Breitman (ed), *Malcolm X. Speaks*, 107-08.
110. P. Huckaby, in *Th Today*, 24/4, Jan. 1968, 498-506; S. Yette, *The Choice*, esp. chs. 1, 3, and 4; W. Grier and P. Cobbs, *Black Rage*, chs. 1, 2, and 10.
111. C. Ellis, *Beyond Liberation*, 97.
112. B. Karis (ed), *The End of White World Supremacy*, 79-80.
113. "Young Lions" is a popular term for politicized black youth. Cf. P. Brookes and I. Powell, "Taming the Lions", in *Mother Jones*, Jun. 1990.
114. P. Goldman, *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*, 184.
115. W. Grier and P. Cobbs, *Black Rage*, 200-13.
116. G. Breitman (ed), *By Any Means Necessary*, 178-79.
117. J. Cone, *Martin and Malcolm and America*, 195.
118. G. Breitman (ed), *Malcolm X Speaks*, 22.
119. C. Ellis, *Beyond Liberation*, 97.
120. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 377, 381-82.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Phrase coined by S. Maimela, *Proclaim Freedom to My People*, 68.
2. *Ant.* 17:342-55, 18:1-2; *War* 2:111-17.
3. J. Stambaugh and D. Balch, *The Social World of the First Christians*, 13-24. In Galilee the interaction between gentiles and Jews seemed to be relaxed and frequent.
   S. Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels*, 35-36.
4. *Ant.* 15:285ff., 356ff.; *War* 1:570-73.

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5. J. Stambaugh and D. Balch, *The Social World of the First Christians*, 25.
6. H. Kee, *The Living World of the New Testament*, 85.
7. H. Kee, *The Living World of the New Testament*, 90-91. Cf. *Ant.* 18:5.
8. H. Kee, *The Living World of the New Testament*, 95.
9. A. Saldarini in J. Neusner et al. (ed), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 72-73.
10. S. Freyne, *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels*, 43.
11. J. Draper in J. Cochrane and G. West (ed), *The Three-fold Cord*, 126.
12. H. Kee, *The Living World of the New Testament*, 62, 119, 124.
    Cf. O. Cullmann, *Victory over Violence*, 73-76.
13. G. Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 168-78.
14. G. Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 225-32.
15. L. Boff, *Jesus Christ Liberator*, 281.
16. L. Boff, *Jesus Christ Liberator*, 280-81.
17. G. Gutiérrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, 140. George Pixley argues that God's rule always indicated salvation for the poor and vengeance on their oppressors. The task of theological production means affirming a God who is "historical and who actively strives to arouse the oppressed and to destroy their oppressors." In N. Gottwald (ed), *The Bible and Liberation*, 118.
18. R. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 154.
19. R. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 52.
20. R. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 53, 160-66.
21. R. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 173. Also 49, 157-64, 167-72.
22. J. Swain, *War, Peace and the Bible*, 27-30.
23. J Riches, *Jesus and the Transformation of Judaism*, 77-111.
24. Biblical scholars hold different opinions regarding the images of God in the Old Testament. Samuel Abrahams presents an exegetical study on divine anger in the prophetic literature. Besides interpreting other portions pertaining to divine wrath at structural injustice (e.g. the parable of Naboth's vineyard where where the latter symbolises 'a God-given land'), he maintains that the prophet Micah, a peasant himself, articulated the protest of the dispossessed. Here an image of a liberating God is projected. *Do Justice or Suffer Fury!*, 3-10, 112-16. In contrast, Itumeleng Mosala argues that if the Bible is viewed in its totality and ideologically, it is actually "a ruling-class document." In particular he perceives the struggle of the exploited to be absent in the text of Micah. To be sure, God devises evil for the ruling class and "all symbols of oppression and exploitation will fall prey to the wrath of Yahweh." Hermeneutically speaking though, Mosala argues, the text does not represent the experience of the oppressed. Here a more oppressive image of God is discovered. *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa*, 118-49.
25. J. Dunn, in J. Neusner et al. (ed), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 283.
26. G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 11-12.
27. G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 11, 27-28. Cf. Samuel Sandmel's remark that "... I had the general feeling ... that our Jewish Jesus had somehow, probably illegitimately, been appropriated from us by the the Christians." *The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity*, 144.
28. G. Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism*, 44-57. J. Dunn states that even if Paul were "a hostile witness" in his post-Pharisee stage, his language in certain passages resemble the Pharisaic use of religious symbols. In J. Neusner et al. (ed), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 270-72. Cf. S. Sandmel's standpoint (*contra* Vermes') that the break between the Jesus movement and Judaism cannot be blamed on the 'Hellenized Christianity' of Paul, but rather on the post-Pauline literature of the early Church. Paul did not envisage the permanent formation of a Christian Church. "Paul believes that he is preaching and teaching the surest and truest version of an unbroken Judaism." *The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity*, 187. Also 160-96.
29. J. Cone, *God of the Oppressed*, 135.
30. See F. Beare, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 157-63; R. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 219-29; A. Verhey, *The Great Reversal*, 30-33.
31. P. Lapide, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 44.
32. G. Buttrick, in G. Buttrick et al. (ed), *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 7, 291-303.
33. J. Lochman, *Signposts to Freedom*, 91.
34. H. Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*, 148.
35. W. Kaiser, *Toward Old Testament Ethics*, 72-75, 299-301.

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36. J. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, 104.
37. D. Cohn-Sherbok, *On Earth as it is in Heaven*, 50.
38. J. Bastiaens, in W. Weren en N. Poulssen (red), *Bij de Put van Jakob*, 72-94.
39. W. Kaiser, *Toward Old Testament Ethics*, 300. Cf. J. Bright, *The Kingdom of God*, 194.
40. According to J. Stott the scribes and Pharisees are rebuked here (see Mt. 5:20). They extended the principle of judicial retribution "to the realm of personal relationships (where it does not belong). They tried to use it to justify personal revenge ..." *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, 104. Stott's assessment of the Pharisees in this respect is not in consonance with their practice of ethical rationalism. They advocated acts of penance, such as monetary compensation (see our Chapter Three).
41. J. Boice, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 159.
42. Cf. J. Bastiaens, in W. Weren en N. Poulssen (red), *Bij de Put van Jakob*, 84-94.
43. J. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, 105.
44. R. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 219-30. So also B. Chilton and J. Mc. Donald: "To seek legal redress is a defeat for the community." *Jesus and the Ethics of the Kingdom*, 103.
45. G. Buttrick, in G. Buttrick et al. (ed), *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 7, 301.
46. W. Klassen, in *Menn Q R*, 37/3, Jul. 1963, 152.
47. R. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, 272. Also 246-75.
48. P. Lapide, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 139.
49. That the Christian community in Rome was not a recent foundation by the time Paul made contact with them, is also stressed by J. Knox, in G. Buttrick et al. (ed), *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 9, 358-62.
50. V. Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul*, 122.
51. Jews were expulsed from Rome as early as the mid-century B.C.E. because of proselytism. In 19 C.E. the Roman government repeated the same punitive action on the same grounds. However, whereas Furnish holds that in this period (i.e. during the 40s and 50s C.E.) Rome regarded Christianity as "unimportant", Smallwood argues that the enthusiastic proselytism of the early Christian church made them "a serious threat to public order." E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 205-12; cf. V. Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul*, 122.
52. V. Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul*, 122.
53. Tacitus, *Annals* 15, 44. Also 38-44. E. Smallwood states that the classical historian's explanation is acceptable if the early church's belief that Christ's second coming would mean an end of the world through fire, was misunderstood by ignorant outsiders. However, an alternative view is possible. She infers from the opinions of churchfathers Melito and Clement that the Roman Christians could have been temporarily persecuted because of their doctrinal views, and not because they were accused of incendiarism. The conflict between Judaism and its offspring brought matters to a head: "... it was not a spontaneous attack by the emperor but was engineered by the Jews in an attempt to enlist the might of Rome as their ally in their conflict with the new sect which they feared and hated." *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 218-19.
54. V. Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul*, 116. Also 23-26; 123.
55. ICT, *The Kairos Document*, 23. Also 3-5.
56. H. Moxnes, in J. Neusner et al. (ed), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 212.
57. H. Moxnes, in J. Neusner et al. (ed), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 209-11.
58. J. Boice, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 110-11.
59. W. Munro, *Authority in Paul and Peter*, 66.
60. Paul arrived in Rome as a prisoner in the early sixties, i.e. before the Neronian persecution of Christians in 64 (Acts 28:16). His optimism regarding Roman justice further rested on his status as a Roman citizen (Acts 22:25-28), which afforded him an option to be tried by local courts in Rome. What led to Paul's arrest, was that he was confused with a pseudo-messiah from Egypt, who caused an uproar at the time. Felix (52-60) kept Paul in custody for the last two years of his procuratorship, whilst awaiting the results of an investigation by the Sanhedrin. His successor, Festus (60-62) then yielded to the apostle's appeal to be tried in Rome. Ironically "according to pious tradition, he met his death there in the Christian persecution under Nero." J. Stambaugh and D. Balch, *The Social World of the First Christians*, 160; also 30-34, 60-62, 160-65. Cf. E. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, 275-77.
61. See W. Boesak in *J Th So Africa*, 64-68, Sept.1988; "Consultation on the Legitimacy of the South African Government", jointly organised by the WCC and SACC in Harare, 4-8 Sept. 1989, unpublished papers; *J Th So Africa*, 63, June 1988, various articles; C. Lienemann-Perrin and W. Lienemann (ed), *Legitimacy Discussions in South African Churches*, Marburg, 1987; *The Lusaka Statement*, issued by the WPCC, May 1987; Programme to Combat Racism, *Annual Report 1988*, WCC, Geneva *Sojourners*: A Special Issue from

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South Africa, Vol. 17, No. 8, August 1988; SACBC, *Draft Documents for Discussion on the Question of Illegitimacy*, Khanya House, Pretoria, undated; WCC, *The Harare Declaration: Theology in Global Context Program*, Closter (New Jersey) undated.

62. ICT, *The Kairos Document*, 23.
63. A. van Schelven in T. Beza, *Concerning the Rights of Rulers Over Their Subjects and the Duty of Subjects Towards Their Rulers* 1-14.
64. T. Beza, *Concerning the Rights of Rulers Over Their Subjects and the Duty of Subjects Towards Their Rulers*, 41.
65. C. Villa-Vicencio, *Civil Disobedience and Beyond*, 94-96.
66. G. Setiloane in A. Boesak and C. Villa-Vicencio (ed), *When Prayer Makes News*, 137.
67. Z. Mbali, *The Churches and Racism*, 110-13.
68. M. Mathabane, *Kaffir Boy*, x.
69. T. Matura, *Gospel Radicalism*, 119.
70. T. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus*, 171.
71. T. Cullinan, *The Passion of Political Love*, 72.
72. SACBC and WPCC Statements, "The Churches Condemn Indemnity Bill", in *Challenge*, No 11, Dec./Jan. 1993. Cf. AZAPO's standpoint that the liberation of the land includes the necessity "to avenge murder". I. Mosala in *J B Th SA*, 5/2, Nov. 1991, 45.
73. J. Lucas, *Freedom and Grace*, 78-84.
74. ICT, *The Kairos Document*, 9-11.
75. DRCA Action, *The Saga of Vereeniging*, 2/89, July 1989; The Rustenburg Confession in *The Argus*, 6 Nov. 1990; *Die Burger*, 9 Nov. 1990; *Cape Times*, 10 Nov. 1990.
76. *Die Burger*, 9 Nov. 1990; *Trouw*, 9 Nov. 1990.
77. A. Stubbs in S. Biko, *I Write What I Like*, 215. I differ from Bosch who contends that forgiveness, 'because it is in its essence unconditional', even precedes confessions of guilt: "Dit beteken dat vergifnis in 'n sekere sin tot 'n ander orde behoort as versoening en geregtigheid ... gaan dit selfs aan skuldbelydenis vooraf". *Rapport*, 7 Dec. 1990.
78. WCRP-SA, *Declaration on Religious Rights and Responsibilities*, adopted at a National Inter-Faith Conference, Pretoria, 22-24 Nov. 1992.
79. For a philosophical discussion of retribution (arguments both pro and contra), see J. Murphy, *Retribution, Justice and Therapy*, especially 77-143.
80. G. Glassé, *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 324.
81. C. Riemer, in *S E Asia J Th*, 18, 1977, 46-50.
82. I. Shalaby, in *J Rel Thot* 35/2, Fall-Wint. 1977-78, 42-49. Note that *Jihad* is the Arabic term for the struggle or contact between two opposing forces, whereas *Eitada* mean to attack, or to initiate the act of aggression. See also E. Bishop, in *Muslim W* 48/3, Jul. 1958, 223-36; U. Haarman, in *Muslim W* 68/1, Jan. 1978, 15-24.
83. Malcolm X and A. Haley, *Autobiography*, 428.
84. G. Breitman (ed), *Malcolm X speaks*, 12-13.
85. P. Marshall, *Thine is the Kingdom*, 63.
86. K. Asmal in H. Kochler and P. Lang (ed), *Terrorism and National Liberation*, 137-50. See also ANC, *Arusha Conference: The World United Against Apartheid for a Democratic South Africa*, AC/BP-08/87, Dec. 1987; *The Vrye Weekblad - Sowetan Quarterly*, "State of the Nation: A View from the Precipice", Spring 1992.
87. D. Foster, *Detention and Torture in South Africa*, ch. 4.
88. J. Lelyveld, *Move Your Shadow*, 200.
89. D. Omar in D. Hansson and D. van Zyl Smit, *Towards Justice?* 17-27.
90. N. Steytler in D. Hansson and D. van Zyl Smit, *Towards Justice?* 106-30.
91. *Die Burger*, 13 Aug. 1990; *Die Burger*, 15 Aug. 1990; *The Weekly Mail*, 6/39, 12 Oct. 1990; *Rapport*, 4 Nov. 1990; *Cape Times*, 17 Oct. 1990; *Rapport*, 18 Nov. 1990; *Cape Times*, 27 Nov. 1990; *Sunday Times*, 29 Dec. 1991; *Sunday Times*, 2 Feb. 1992.
92. *The Argus*, August 13, 1990.
93. H. Wiersinga, *Versoening als Verandering*, 56-93. Again it is a question of hermeneutics. Because he does not adequately root Jesus' 'method' of love and forgiveness in the Torah, he ultimately experiences problems with legal vindication ("Jesus reageerde op een ander niveau.")
94. F. Hertz, *The Development of the German Public Mind*, 179.
95. J. Godsey, *Preface to Bonhoeffer*, 1-7.

96. D. Bonhoeffer, *No Rusty Swords*, 221.
97. P. Tillich, *Love, Power and Justice*, 94.
98. *Resister*, No. 66, Third Quarter, 1990.
99. *Sunday Times (Cape Edition)*, 20 Dec. 1992; also *Sunday Times (Cape Edition)*, 24 Jan. 1993.
100. B. Karis (ed), *The End of White World Supremacy*, 125.
101. D. Rahbar, *God of Justice*, 5-6, 226. The wrongdoers will be punished in the "Fire" for their evil (*dalal*). Even if scholars differ on whether "hell" should be interpreted spiritually or physically (or both), it still represents the final manifestation of God's wrath. Cf. e.g. Sūra 7:38 with *Gehenna* in Enoch 54:1-2; II Baruch 59:10; Mt. 5:22. Also F. Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, 34-36; G. Buttrick et al. (ed), *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 7, 296. Maimonides states that the just shall inherit "spiritual bliss", while the wicked would be excluded from it, "this being a form of extirpation or *Kareth*. P. Birnbaum, *A Book of Jewish Concepts*, 600.
102. F. Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, 54. Also 51-57, 76-77, 106-113.
103. P. Holt et al. (ed), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1A, 18.
104. P. Holt et al. (ed), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1A, 15.
105. P. Holt et al. (ed), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1A, 25.
106. P. Holt et al. (ed), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1A, 35. Cf. F. Schuon, *Understanding Islam*, 71-78.
107. Y. Kaufman, *The Religion of Israel*, 145-50.
108. J. Neusner, *Christian Faith and the Bible of Judaism*, 173.
109. L. Baeck, *The Essence of Judaism*, 171-75.
110. Quoted in L. Baeck, *The Essence of Judaism*, 173.
111. B. Witbooi, *The Decline of the KhoiKhoi in South Africa*, 89-97. Please note that in the Khoi-Khoi language the || is a click.
112. B. Witbooi, *The Decline of the KhoiKhoi in South Africa*, 92. Also I. Schapera, *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, Bushmen and Hottentots, 376.
113. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo?*, par X-XVI.
114. T. Mofokeng, "*The Crucified Among the Crossbearers*, 38.
115. T. Mofokeng in *J B Th SA*, 3/2, Nov. 1989, 50.
116. Cited in P. Reynolds, *Childhood In Crossroads*, 73-75. See also Z. Mokgoebo in *Apologia* 4/1, Mrch 1989.
117. ICT, *The Kairos Document*, 7.
118. A. Boesak and C. Villa-Vicencio (ed), *When Prayer Makes News*, 39.
119. A. Shād, *The Rights of Allāh and Human Rights*, 179-80.
120. A. Shād, *The Rights of Allāh and Human Rights*, 178.
121. P. Birnbaum, *A Book of Jewish Concepts*, 255.
122. R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 175.
123. R. Horsley and J. Hanson adduce Hillel's explanation of the purpose of the *prosbul* (M. Shevuot 10.3-4) to show that the poor took the sabbatical release of debts very seriously in the late Second Temple period. Because of double taxation, there was considerable pressure for peasants to obtain loans. However, creditors were unwilling to make loans in the last few years prior to the sabbatical year. Hillel therefore proposed a legal ruse so that desperate peasants could borrow loans. Though the immediate effect was relief, the long-range consequence was permanent debt. *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 59-60. Cf. J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 114.
124. G. Setiloane in *J B Th SA*, 5/2, Nov. 1991, 37.
125. G. Setiloane in *J B Th SA*, 5/2, Nov. 1991, 37.
126. S. Abrahams, *Do Justice or Suffer Fury!*, 118-20.
127. D. Mosoma in *J B Th SA*, 5/2, Nov. 1991, 26.
128. In V. Fabella and S. Torres (ed), *Irruption of the Third World*, 193.
129. See Charles Nyamiti's explanation of the category 'family' in S. Torres and V. Fabella (ed), *The Emergent Gospel*, 31-45; also B. Witbooi's depiction of the deculturalization and disintegration of the Khoi-Khoi. In B. Tlhagale and I Mosala (ed), *Hammering Swords into Ploughshares*, 101-09.
130. B. Karis (ed), *The End of White World Supremacy*, 80.
131. In primitive society shame rested on a family if one of its members was killed. The family's nearest respresentative, called "blood-redeemer" (*go'el ha-dam*), had to erase the shame by executing the murderer. Because preliminary trials were non-existent, the second person's family frequently established a blood feud. The Mosaic legislation, however, assigns the decision of the guilt or the innocence of the killer to an impartial court of

justice. P. Birnbaum, *A Book of Jewish Concepts*, 484, 641.

132. K. Lebacqz, *Justice in an Unjust World*, 82-83, 116-20.

133. G. Wilmore and J. Cone, *Black Theology*, chs 7 and 8. Also note Wilmore's listing of reparations at the political and international level, 96.

134. C. Villa-Vicencio in *J Ch St*, Vol. 32, Autumn 1990, 861.

135. S. Duncan, "Land Issues and a Bill of Rights", Address at UCT's Graduation Ceremony, Dec. 12, 1991; S. Duncan, "The Right to Land", in *Challenge*, No 5, Apr. 1992, 22-23; J. Cochrane in W. Vorster (ed), *Building a New Nation*, 51-75; S. Maimela, B. Ncube and F. Chikane, "The Cry for Life", *Challenge*, No 4, Mrch. 1992, 6-7.

136. P. Holt et al. (ed), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1A, 44-56. For details on the battle fought at Badr, see M. Bashumail, *The Great Battle of Badr*.

137. P. Holt et al. (ed), *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1A, 51.

138. J. Cone, *For My People*, 55. See also B. Harrison et al. (ed), *The Public Vocation of Christian Ethics*, ch. 3.

139. N. Wolterstorff, *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*, 119.

140. L. Baeck, *The Essence of Judaism*, 123.

141. L. Baeck, *The Essence of Judaism*, 126.

142. L. Baeck, *The Essence of Judaism*, 167.

143. In G. Cloete and D. Smit (ed), *A Moment of Truth*, 3.

144. WCC, *Christ - the Hope of the World*, 37-38.

145. A. van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns*, 262.

146. A. van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns*, 256.

147. Quoted in A. van der Bent, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns*, 188.

148. X. Keyeti in *Challenge*, No 2, Dec. 1991, 24-25.

149. A. Nolan in *Challenge*, No 8, Aug. 1992, 2-4.

150. *The Weekly Mail*, 6/39, 12 Oct. 1990.

151. *Rapport Metro*, 20 Jan. 1991.

152. SACBC, *The Things That Make For Peace*, 100.

153. I. Mosala in *J Th So Africa*, 59, Jul. 1987, 22.

154. *The Argus*, 24 June 1992; *Sunday Times (Cape Edition)*, 6 Dec. 1992. Apla prefers to call the white people of South Africa collectively "the settler community".

155. Z. Kameeta, *Why o Lord?*, 37.

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